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STREET IN SEDAN

PLAN
OF THE
BATTLE OF SEDAN,

ACCOMPANIED BY
A SHORT MEMOIR.

BY
CAPTAIN FITZ-GEORGE,
ROYAL WELCH FUSILIERS.

With Maps and Views.



LONDON:
EDWARD STANFORD, 6 & 7, CHARING CROSS, S.W.
—
1871.

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PREFACE.

BEING in the vicinity of Sedan last winter, and finding that at that time no sketch of the country, on which the battle of Sedan was fought, was published, I conceived the idea of drawing up a rough Plan of the battle-field, to enable those who could not spare the time, or who were unwilling to go there, to understand the nature of the country, and the extraordinary and unusual positions taken up by both armies engaged.

The place and neighbourhood being declared in a state of siege, this was necessarily a task of some difficulty, not to say danger, from the liability of being mistaken as a spy both by Franc-tireurs and German patrols; the materials at hand were of the most limited nature, and in consequence the Plan is sadly wanting in detail.

Wishing to add to the interest of it, I have drawn up from the meagre details at command a précis of the battle, and of the engagements preceding it, besides generalizing on such subjects as affected it. I have endeavoured to make the memoir as brief as possible, and aiming at no literary merit, to limit it to what might interest the general public.

To the attention of those who desire fuller information, I recommend the 'Franco-Prussian War,' edited

by Captain Hozier, and published at uncertain intervals in divisions, in one of which an accurate description of the battle will shortly appear.

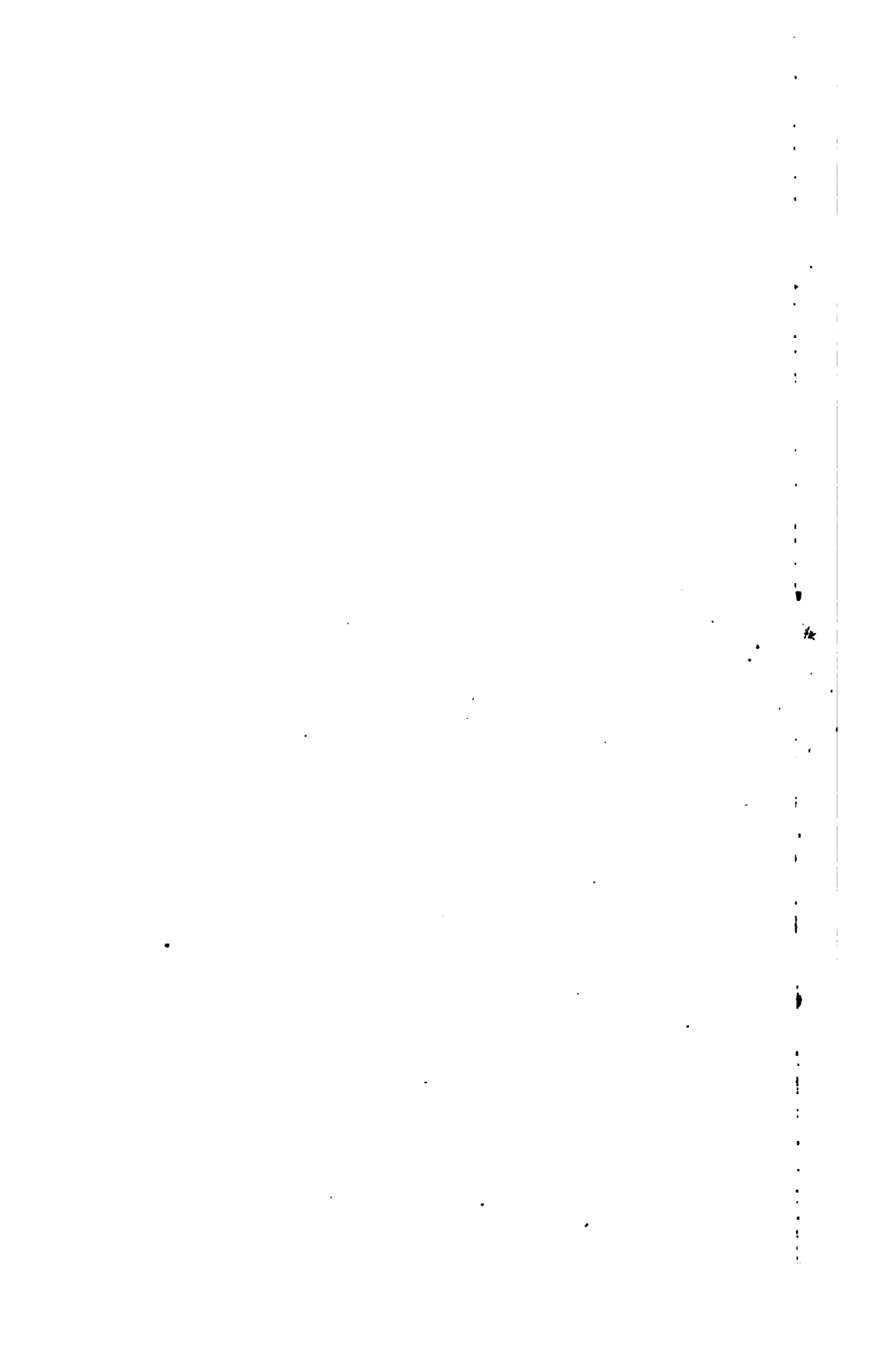
In offering the Plan and Memoir to the public, I am fully conscious how far my humble efforts fall short of what is due to the subject I have taken in hand ; but whatever be the shortcomings in them, I shall feel that I have not quite worked in vain if I succeed in interesting or conveying the least information to my readers.

I must not omit to acknowledge my obligations to the able and spirited war correspondence of the London Press, as well as to the Correspondents I had the good fortune to meet at Sedan, to whose encouragement this modest brochure mainly owes its publication.

G. FITZ-GEORGE.

LONDON, 23rd April, 1871.





MEMOIR OF THE BATTLE OF SEDAN.

THE culminating disaster that befell the Imperial army of France, in the recent campaign, was fated to take place in the vicinity of the fortified town of Sedan, a place probably unknown, by name even, to most Englishmen until the telegrams in the newspapers announced the total overthrow of MacMahon's army, and the surrender of the Emperor Napoleon III. and of the survivors of the terrible conflict fought there on the 1st September, 1870.

Although the fall of Metz, and the surrender of Bazaine with the Imperial Guard and the bulk of the remainder of the original Imperial army, to the troops of Prince Frederick Charles, were subsequent to the battle of Sedan, still, inasmuch as the Imperial dynasty was formally deposed in Paris on the 4th September, 1870, I consider the surrender of the 1st the final disaster that befell the armies of the third Napoleon.

In the 'Edinburgh Gazetteer' we find:

"Sedan, a considerable town in the north-east of France, department of the Ardennes. It is situated on the right bank of the Meuse, and is strongly fortified, being surrounded with walls, bastions, ditches, and other works, constructed partly by Vauban. The old castle, in which Turenne was born, is now converted into an arsenal, and is one of the best in France. The town is divided into Upper and Lower; and,

though not badly built, is, from the uneven and rocky nature of the ground which it occupies, very irregular. Of the population, in number nearly 11,000, a part are Protestants. Sedan has been long noted for its manufactures of superfine woollens, and for a very different branch of industry, the making of fire-arms and copper articles; it has likewise a cannon foundry. Sedan was formerly the seat of a Protestant University. 37 miles S.E. of Charlemont, and 170 N.E. of Paris. Long. $4^{\circ} 57' 50''$ E., lat. $49^{\circ} 42' 29''$ N."

The above was written in 1827.

Johnston's 'Gazetteer' in 1859 gives a population of 16,759, and at the present day, including the suburbs, it has about 20,000 inhabitants.

Sedan is one of three fortresses—namely, Sedan, Mezières, and Montmedy—originally constructed to meet and check any invasion of France from Belgian territory, and is the principal town in the fourth arrondissement of the department of the Ardennes, being situated on the east bank of the Meuse, about 160 miles north-east of Paris.

The fortress is constructed on a combination of Vauban's different systems, and a few years back could have stood a long siege; but the improvements in modern artillery have rendered it untenable, owing to the high ground unfortified that environs it, and at present it is only a *cul-de-sac* for any shot or shell that may be projected against it from the surrounding heights.

It is built on an uneven site, surrounded by meadows, châteaux, and cultivated fields, and has an admirable defensive system of inundations and wet

ditches, the water for which is obtained from the Meuse, which winds picturesquely through the southern part of the town.

The hospital stands out prominently on the north side, while the citadel is on an eminence to the south-east. There are also an arsenal, and three large barracks, besides stores and officers' quarters.

The fortress is overlooked by masses of dark forest; and, while here and there may be seen large plateaux, the surrounding hills, more especially on the north side, are broken into deep and precipitous gorges; and the rivers Meuse and Chiers, and numerous smaller streams, winding fantastically here and there, form an intricate network of obstacles difficult for an army to overcome, when faced by a determined and skilful adversary.

Commercially the town is noted for its woollen, cloth, linen, and numerous other manufactures; while historically it is associated with the names of Henry IV., Louis XIV., and of Marshal Turenne—who was born there, and whose statue is one of the local objects of interest.

The positions of the different corps constituting the French army, and their relative strength in men and guns at the opening of the campaign, were as follows:—

Advanced Line.

1st Corps, under Marshal MacMahon, consisting of 90 guns, 3,500 cavalry, and 35,000 infantry, at Strasbourg.

2nd Corps, under General Froissard, 72 guns, 2,600 cavalry, and 26,250 infantry, at St. Avold.

4th Corps, under General L'Admirault, of similar strength, at Thionville;

And the 5th Corps, under General De Failly, also of similar strength, at Bitche.

The advanced line, therefore, forming a total of 306 guns, 11,300 cavalry, and 113,750 infantry.

In Support.

The 3rd Corps, comprising 90 guns, 3,500 cavalry, and 35,000 infantry, under Marshal Bazaine, at Metz.

The Imperial Guard, consisting of 60 guns, 3,600 cavalry, and 16,650 infantry, under General Bourbaki, at Nancy.

In Reserve.

At Châlons:—The cavalry reserve, numbering 36 guns and 6,250 sabres; and the 6th Corps, comprising 90 guns, 3,500 cavalry, and 35,000 infantry, under Marshal Canrobert.

At Belfort:—The 7th Corps, numbering 72 guns, 2,600 cavalry, and 26,500 infantry, under General Felix Douay.

The whole forming a grand total of

Guns.			Cavalry.			Infantry.	
654	...	...	30,750	...	...	226,900	

The French position strategically viewed was thus as follows:—

Strasbourg, Bitche, St. Avold, Metz, and Thionville were on one line of railway.

Strasbourg had also railway communication with

Nancy and Metz by Saverne, Sarrebourg, and Lunéville; and with Belfort to its rear.

Nancy communicated with Paris by Vitry and Châlons; and Thionville with Paris by Montmedy, Mezières, and Rheims.

Thus the whole front towards Germany had ample railway connection, and from different points along the French line railways were available to concentrate troops in rear or on the flanks.

Strasbourg was the base of operations for the French right, and Metz for the centre and left.

Besides Strasbourg and Metz other frontier fortresses strengthened the advanced line—Bitche and Phalsbourg in the Vosges, and Thionville on the Moselle.

The French army occupied, therefore, a very long line, and its advanced corps, extending from Thionville on the left to Strasbourg on the right, were scattered over too wide a front, insufficiently connected, and too far from their supports at Metz; and, as the result proved, were liable to be beaten in detail and cut off from each other. Had the French organized their troops rapidly at the above places, and then, concentrating at some point, crossed the Rhine and separated Southern from Northern Germany, a different *finale* might have been the result of initiating the war in the enemy's country; but scattered along so wide a front, and ill-informed by its scouts, the French army was strategically in a very dangerous position. It is believed that the Emperor's original plan of the campaign was as follows:—

To concentrate at Metz and Strasbourg, and form his reserves at Châlons—thus leaving the enemy in doubt as to his point of crossing the frontier.

The armies from Metz and Strasbourg were then to be combined, and crossing the Rhine at Maxau, leaving Rastadt on their right, to cut the communication between Northern and Southern Germany. The reserves were to follow and protect the rear of the French and also the eastern frontier.

The French fleet were to cruise in the Baltic, thus detaining a large German force to watch the coast.

The delay in the organization of the different French corps, and the bad system of men joining their regimental dépôts instead of proceeding at once to their stations—added to the pernicious system of extreme centralization that prevailed, and the fact that the matériel was stored in different cities in enormous magazines instead of being convenient to the districts requiring it, in consequence of which many things lumbered up the railways, never reaching their destination, and numerous regiments entered on the campaign deficient of *tentes d'abri*, havresacks, camp-kettles, &c.—all conduced to upset the Emperor's plan, the only chance of success for which was in surpassing the enemy in rapidity of movement.

The German armies consisted of the 1st, or Army of the Saar, under General von Steinmetz, comprising the 7th Corps of Westphalians, under General von Zastrow; the 8th Rhinelanders, under General von Göben; part of the 10th Corps; and the Brandenburg

division of cavalry ; total strength, 70,000 men, and 186 guns.

The 1st Army occupied the line of the Saar, from Saarburg on the right, to Saarbrücken ; while its supports were at Ottweiler, Homburg, and Landstuhl, in the vicinity of the railway to Saarbrücken.

The 2nd, or Army of the Rhine, under Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia, comprising the 1st East Prussian Corps, under General Manteuffel ; the 2nd Pomeranian, under General Fransetzky ; the 3rd Brandenburger, under General von Alvensleben II. ; the 4th Prussians, Saxons, and Thuringians, under General von Alvensleben I. ; the 9th Schleswig Holstein, under General von Manstein ; the 10th Hanoverians, under General von Voigts Rhetz ; the 12th Saxons, under the Crown Prince of Saxony ; the Hesse Darmstadt division ; the Garrison of Mayence (Mainz) ; and the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 10th, and 12th cavalry divisions ; making a total of 250,000 men, with 660 guns.

The above having crossed the Rhine at Mayence and Mannheim, prolonged the line to the left by Zweibrücken, and held Kaiserslautern and Neustadt in force.

And the 3rd, or Army of the South, under the Crown Prince of Prussia, consisting of the Corps of the Guard, under Prince Augustus of Würtemberg ; the 5th Poseners, under General von Kirchbach ; the 6th Silesians, under General von Tümpling ; the 11th Hesse and Nassau, under General von Böse ; the Würtemberg contingent, under Lieutenant-General von

Obernitz; the Baden contingent, under General von Beyer; the Bavarian contingent, under General von der Tann; and the 6th cavalry division: making a total of 250,000 men, with 660 guns.

This army occupied the junction of the railways which come from Neustadt and Carlsruhe, and occupied Landau, Neustadt, and Spire with its reserves.

These three German armies formed a grand total of about 570,000 men, with 1,506 guns, and strategically were admirably disposed to defend their country from the invader. Although the system of railways on their side was hardly as complete as on the French side, yet the superior organization existing on the German lines compensated for any advantage on that score. General Steinmetz had a railway along his front, commencing at Trèves (Trier), and connecting with Prince Frederick Charles's position by Homburg; while the Crown Prince of Prussia had railway communication with the 2nd Army by Neustadt and Landau; and the whole line extended from Saarburg on the right to a junction called Wenden on the left; and as the railways between those points are concave to the French frontier, the lines were available with safety for rapid concentration at any point. There were several lines of retreat by rail available for each army, and the position was strengthened by the fortresses of Mayence, Landau, and Germersheim.

I append lists, containing fuller details of the forces of the French and German armies, taken from an account by a staff officer published shortly after the

commencement of the campaign. While I do not vouch for their correctness, I believe the totals shown in the tabular estimates to be reconcilable with the figures I have already given; especially when we take into consideration the difficulties all writers laboured under at the beginning of the campaign, from the hostility of the commanders to all who did not belong to either army; especially to those who, by their statistics and military criticisms, might have afforded indirectly information to the enemy.

FRENCH ARMY.

The 1st Corps d'Armée. MARSHAL MACMAHON.

Chef d'Etat Major, Colson, Gen. de Brigade.

Chef d'Artillerie, Forgeot, Gen. de Brigade.

	Battalions, or Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
			Infantry.	Cavalry.
1st Division. Ducrot, Gen. de Div.				
Two brigades—				
1 battalion of Chasseurs, 4 regiments of the } line }	13	..	8,750	..
Artillery, 2 batteries }	..	12	..	..
Total }	13	12	8,750	..
2nd Division. Abel Douay, Gen. de Div.				
Two brigades—				
1 battalion of Chasseurs, 2 regiments of the } line }	7	..	4,750	..
1 ditto of Zouaves, 1 ditto of Turcos }	6	..	4,500	..
Artillery, 2 batteries }	..	12	..	..
Total }	13	12	9,250	..
3rd Division. Raoult, Gen. de Div.				
Two brigades—				
1 battalion of Chasseurs, 2 regiments of the } line }	7	..	4,750	..
1 ditto of Zouaves, 1 ditto of Turcos }	6	..	4,500	..
Artillery, 2 batteries }	..	12	..	..
Total }	13	12	9,250	..

The 1st Corps d'Armée—continued.

	Battalions, or Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
			Infantry.	Cavalry.
4th Division. Lartigues, Gen. de Div. Two brigades—				
1 battalion of Chasseurs, 2 regiments of the line }	7	..	4,750	..
1 ditto of Zouaves, 1 ditto of Turcos ..	6	..	4,500	..
Artillery, 2 batteries	..	12	..	..
Total	13	12	9,250	..
Cavalry Div. Duhesme, Gen. de Div. Three brigades—				
1st Brigade, 1 regiment of Hussars, 1 Chasseurs à cheval }	28	..	..	3,640
2nd „ 1 regt. of Lancers, 1 Dragoons	..	12	..	..
3rd „ 2 „ Cuirassiers }	..	12	..	..
Artillery, 2 batteries	..	12	..	..
Total	28	12	..	3,640
Artillery reserve of this corps, 5 batteries	..	30	..	..
Grand total of 1st Corps d'Armée ..	41	90	36,500	3,640

The 2nd Corps d'Armée. LIEUT.-GENERAL DE FROISSARD.

Chef d'Etat Major, Saget, Gen. de Brigade.

Chef d'Artillerie, Gagneur, Gen. de Brigade.

	Battalions, or Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
			Infantry.	Cavalry.
1st Division. Vergé, Gen. de Div. Two brigades—				
1 battalion of Chasseurs, 4 regiments of the line }	13	..	8,750	..
Artillery, 2 batteries	..	12	..	..
Total	13	12	8,750	..
2nd Division. Bataille, Gen. de Div., same formation and strength }	13	12	8,750	..
3rd Div. Laveau-Coupet, Gen. de Div., ditto	13	12	8,750	..
Cavalry Division. Letellier, Gen. de Div., 1 brigade Chasseurs, 1 ditto Dragoons, 4 regiments, 2 batteries }	16	12	..	2,080
Artillery reserve of this corps, 4 batteries	..	24	..	..
Grand total of 2nd Corps d'Armée ..	45	72	26,250	2,080

The 3rd Corps d'Armée. MARSHAL BAZAINE.

Chef d'Etat Major, Maneque, Gen. de Brigade de Artillerie.
De Rochebouet, Gen. de Brigade.

	Battalions, or Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
			Infantry.	Cavalry.
1st Division. Montandon, Gen. de Div...	13	12	8,750	..
2nd " De Castagny " " ..	13	12	8,750	..
3rd " Metman " " ..	13	12	8,750	..
4th " Decaen " " ..	13	12	8,750	..
Cavalry—				
1st Brigade. 3 regiments of Chasseurs ..	28	12	..	3,640
2nd " 2 " of Dragoons ..				
3rd " 2 " of " ..				
Artillery reserve of corps like 1st Corps ..	..	30	..	..
Grand total 3rd Corps d'Armée	41	90	35,000	3,640

The 4th Corps d'Armée. LIEUT.-GENERAL DE L'ADMIRALTY.

Chef d'Etat Major, Besson, Gen. de Brigade.

Chef d'Artillerie, Lafaille, Gen. de Brigade.

1st Division, De Cissey; 2nd, Rose; 3rd, De Lorencez;

Cavalry—Legrand, Generaux de Division.

	Battalions, or Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
			Infantry.	Cavalry.
Same strength and composition as the } 2nd Corps }	41	72	26,250	2,080

The 5th Corps d'Armée. LIEUT.-GENERAL DE FAILLY.

Chef d'Etat Major, Besson, Gen. de Brigade.

Chef d'Artillerie, Liidot, Gen. de Brigade.

1st Division, Goze; 2nd, De l'Abadie; 3rd, Guyot;

Cavalry—Brahans, Generaux de Division.

	Battalions, or Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
			Infantry.	Cavalry.
Same strength and composition as the } 4th Corps }	41	72	26,250	2,080

The Imperial Guard. LIEUT.-GENERAL BOURBAKI.

Chef d'Etat Major, d'Auvergne, Gen. de Division.
 Chef d'Artillerie, Pe d'Arros, Gen. de Brigade.

	Battalions, or Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
			Infantry.	Cavalry.
1st Division. De Ligny, Gen. de Div.				
Two brigades—				
1 battalion of Chasseurs	1	..	850	..
4 regiments of Voltigeurs	12	..	7,200	..
Artillery, 2 batteries	..	..	..	..
Total	13	12	8,050	..
2nd Division. Picard, Gen. de Div.				
Two brigades—				
Regiments of Zouaves	2	..	3,000	..
3 regiments of Grenadiers	9	..	5,400	..
Artillery, 2 batteries	..	12	..	..
Total	11	12	8,400	..
Cavalry Division. Devaux, Gen. de Div.				
1st brigade, 1 reg. Chasseurs, 1 ditto Guides	8	..	..	1,200
2nd " 1 " Dragoons, 1 " Lancers	8	..	..	1,200
3rd " 1 " Carabineers, 1 Cuirassiers	8	..	..	1,200
Artillery, 2 batteries	..	12	..	..
Total	24	12	..	3,600
Artillery reserve of the Imperial Guard, } 4 batteries }	..	24	..	..
Grand total, Imperial Guard	44	60	16,450	3,600

The 6th Corps. MARSHAL CANROBERT.

	Battalions, or Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
			Infantry.	Cavalry.
1st Division of cavalry } Probably 1 light {	16	12	..	3,600
2nd " " } division and 2 {	16	12	..	3,600
3rd " " } heavy ditto .. {	16	12	..	3,600
1 division of infantry	13	12	8,750	..
Artillery reserve, probably 5 to 6 batteries, } say 6 }	..	30	..	..
Grand total 6th Corps d'Armée	44	78	8,750	10,800

"The 7th Corps is said to be in course of formation, under General Felix Douay, with troops that still remain in

Algeria, from whence about 18,000 men of the 1st Corps have been already withdrawn. The division hitherto in garrison at Rome will also be available, it seems. This corps, when formed, will probably have the same composition and strength as the 2nd and 4th Corps.

“The sum total of the Army of the Rhine will therefore be, according to our mode of reckoning, merely the combatants of the infantry and cavalry, and the guns of the artillery, as follows:—

	Batta- lions.	Squad- rons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
				Infantry.	Cavalry.
1st Corps d'Armée in the 1st line	52	28	90	36,500	3,640
2nd " " " "	39	16	72	26,250	2,080
3rd " " " "	52	28	90	35,000	3,640
4th " " " "	39	16	72	26,250	2,080
5th " " " "	39	16	72	26,250	2,080
Total 1st line	221	104	396	150,250	13,520
Imperial Guard—as reserve	24	24	60	16,650	3,600
6th Corps d'Armée	13	48	78	8,750	10,800
Total reserve	37	72	138	25,400	14,400
Grand total	258	176	534	175,650	27,920
				203,570	
Add to this for the artillery			17,000		
" " engineers			4,000		
" " train			5,000		
" " non-combatants			4,000		
				30,000	
And we have in the field				233,570	

The smaller number of infantry shown here can be accounted for by the supposition that there were more regiments of Zouaves in the field forces than the compiler of the above allowed for; and, to explain my meaning, I must state that a regiment of Zouaves has three battalions, whereas a regiment of Chasseurs has but one.

He has also understated the numbers of the cavalry and artillery, under the supposition that the squadrons and batteries were more under their war establishments than they really were.

GERMAN ARMIES.

	Batta- lions.	Squad- rons.	Guns.	Combatants.			
				Infantry.	Cavalry.		
The Corps d'Armée of the Guard.— Prince Augustus of Württemberg.							
1st Division, Infantry.	{ 1st brigade of infantry, 2 regiments}	6	..	6,000	..		
		9	..	9,000	..		
			..	4	..	550	
		..		24	..	..	
				4 batteries}	..	..	..
Total 1st Division ..		15	4	24	15,000	550	
2nd Division, Infantry.	{ 3rd brigade of infantry, 2 regiments}	6	..	6,000	..		
		6	..	6,000	..		
			..	4	..	550	
		..		24	..	..	
				4 batteries}	..	..	..
Total 2nd Division ..		12	4	24	12,000	550	
Cavalry Division.	{ 1 brigade heavy cavalry, 2 regiments}	..	8	..	..	1,100	
		..	8	..	..	1,100	
			..	8	..	1,100	
		..		8	..	1,100	
				Horse artillery, 2 batteries	..	..	8
Total Cavalry Division		..	24	8	..	3,300	
Artillery Reserve.	{ 3rd foot division, 4 bat- talions}	..	..	24	..	..	
		..	..	16	..	..	
			1	..	..	1,000	..
		1		..	..	1,000	..
				1 battalion sharpshooters of the guard}	1	..	..
Total Guards		29	32	96	29,000	4,400	

	Batta- lions.	Squad- rons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
				Infantry.	Cavalry.
The 1st Corps, Lieut.-General von Manteuffel.					
Infantry { 1st Division	12	..	24	12,000	..
{ 2nd Division	12	..	24	12,000	..
Jäger, 1 battalion	1	..	..	1,000	..
Cavalry, 6 regiments, with horse artillery 2 battalions	..	24	8	..	3,300
Artillery reserve	..	..	40	..	..
Grand total 1st Corps	25	24	96	25,000	3,300
The 2nd Corps, Lieut.-General von Fransecky	25	24	96	25,000	3,300
The 5th Corps, Lieut.-General von Kirchbach	25	24	96	25,000	3,300
The 6th Corps, Lieut.-General von Tümping	25	24	96	25,000	3,300
The 7th Corps, Lieut.-General von Zastrow	25	24	96	25,000	3,300
The 8th Corps, Lieut.-General von Göben	25	24	96	25,000	3,300
The 10th Corps, Lieut.-General von Voigts Rhetz	25	24	96	25,000	3,300
The 3rd Corps,* Lieut.-General von Alvensleben II.	28	24	96	28,000	3,300
The 4th Corps,† Lieut.-General von Alvensleben I.	31	24	96	31,000	3,300
The 9th Corps,‡ Lieut.-General von Manstein	29	24	96	29,000	3,300
The 11th Corps, Lieut.-General von Böse, has 3 infantry divisions, and 3 Jäger battalions, with but 2 regiments of cavalry	35	8	96	35,000	1,100
The 12th Corps, the Crown Prince of Saxony, with 1 extra infantry regiment and 2 Jäger battalions	29	24	96	29,000	3,300
Total of the North German Con- federation, including Guards ..	356	304	1,248	356,000	41,800

* 1 brigade has 3 regiments.

† 2 brigades have 3 regiments each.

‡ This corps has 2 Jäger regiments and 1 brigade with 3 regiments.

"Supposing that two of these *Corps d'Armée* be retained in the north of Germany for the defence of the coasts, that is to say, the 9th and 10th in Schleswig and Hanover, the sum total of these would be 54,000 infantry, 6,600 cavalry combatants, and 192 guns, which being deducted from the total of the North German Confederation Army, would leave the latter 302,000 infantry, 35,200 cavalry combatants, with

1,056 guns, to oppose to the French Army on the Rhine. To this force, however, must be added the troops of Southern Germany, that is to say, Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Baden.

"Bavaria can bring into the field two corps with four infantry divisions of two brigades each, the brigade consisting of two infantry regiments and one Jäger battalion (with a battery of six guns); and in addition to this, ten regiments of cavalry, of four field squadrons each, with twenty-eight foot and four horse batteries.

"The Bavarian Field Army amounts altogether to—

	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
				Infantry.	Cavalry.
Infantry of the line, 16 regiments	48	..	..	45,000	..
Jäger	8	..	..	5,000	..
Cavalry	..	40	..	..	5,000
Artillery batteries, 32	..	..	192	..	..
Total in 2 Corps d'Armée ..	56	40	192	50,000	5,000

"The Würtemberg Division consists of one division, three brigades of infantry, one division of cavalry, and nine batteries of artillery, viz. :—

	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
				Infantry.	Cavalry.
Infantry of the line, 8 regiments	16	..	..	16,000	..
Jäger	3	..	..	3,000	..
Cavalry, 4 regiments	..	16	..	..	2,500
Artillery, 9 batteries	..	..	54	..	..
Total Würtemberg Division ..	19	16	54	19,000	2,500

"The Division of the Grand Duchy of Baden :—

	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
				Infantry.	Cavalry.
Infantry, 6 regiments	18	..	..	18,000	..
Cavalry, 3 regiments	..	12	..	..	1,800
Artillery, 7 batteries	..	..	42	..	..
Total Baden Division	18	12	42	18,000	1,800

“The entire Field Force of the north and south of Germany may therefore be thus calculated :—

	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Guns.	Combatants.	
				Infantry.	Cavalry.
9th and 10th <i>Corps d'Armées</i> for defence of Northern Coasts .. }	54	48	192	54,000	6,600
Guards—1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 11th, 12th Corps on the Rhine }	302	256	1,056	302,000	35,200
South German troops—Baden, Württemberg, Bavaria }	93	68	288	87,000	9,300
Total on the Rhine and Southern Germany .. }	395	324	1,344	389,000	44,500
				433,500	

In order to make these figures nearly tally with my previous ones I should remind my readers that the Engineers' train is not included in the above totals; and that in my own figures I allowed for the feeding reserve of 220 guns, 129,000 infantry, and 16,000 cavalry, all close by in the fortresses and camps, and available at any moment, since they could be replaced, as they afterwards were, by the Landwehr.

The German armies were commanded by the King of Prussia, who had General von Moltke as his strategical director; Lieutenant-General von Blumenthal was Chief of the Crown Prince of Prussia's staff; while Colonel von Stiehle held a similar position on the staff of Prince Frederick Charles.

The Emperor Napoleon commanded the French army in person, with Marshal Leboeuf as his Chief of the staff, or Majeur-Général de l'Armée.

The position of the French advanced corps was well suited for attack, but not at all adapted for

defence, as they covered such an extent of front. Assuming the offensive, they might have cut the rails and held the junction of the lines from Trèves (Trier), Bingen, and Mayence, and thereby have severed the communications of the different German armies with each other, besides ascertaining the arrival of the enemy in great force at Trèves and at Landau ; at which latter the Crown Prince massed large bodies of his troops quite close to the division of General Felix Douay, who appears to have been totally unaware of his vicinity. In fact, the French seem to have thought that the Germans would act entirely on the defensive, and this may in some measure account for the gross carelessness and inactivity of their leaders.

The German commanders advanced rapidly to the positions assigned to them, and their armies were complete in matériel of every kind. Finding the French still inactive, the Germans taking the initiative assumed the offensive, and advanced to the frontier ; and on the 4th of August the Crown Prince of Prussia struck the first effective blow of the campaign.

Having thus given the positions of the two armies at the commencement of the campaign, I shall restrict my narrative to the events more immediately affecting the battle of Sedan.

War is considered to have been declared on the 15th July, 1870, when M. Ollivier made his memorable speech in the Corps Législatif, though the formal declaration was delayed a few days.

The causes of this great war between two neigh-

bouring and powerful nations lie out of my province and find no place here, as my object is merely to give a rough and general sketch of the battle of Sedan, to enable my readers to understand more clearly the two plans which accompany it, and if I succeed in doing that, my object will be achieved.

Before the first action took place, the following changes had been effected in the disposition of the French army :—

The Imperial Guard had reached Metz, the 6th Corps had arrived at Nancy, and the 1st was between Strasbourg and the Lauter.

On the 21st July a skirmish took place near Saarbrücken.

On the 2nd August, the heights of Saarbrücken were carried by the French.

On the 4th, a portion of Marshal MacMahon's corps, under General Abel Douay, was defeated and routed at Weissenbourg by the Crown Prince of Prussia, and its commander killed.

On the 6th, the forces under Marshal MacMahon were totally defeated at Wörth by the Crown Prince of Prussia, and General Froissard's corps was beaten at Spicheren and driven back on Metz by General von Steinmetz's army.

On the 10th, Bazaine's, Canrobert's, Froissard's, and L'Admirault's corps and the Imperial Guard concentrated at Metz under Marshal Bazaine.

On the 14th, the indecisive action at Courcelles was fought.

On the 16th, Bazaine was beaten back from Mars la Tour.

On the 18th, the bloody and decisive battle of Gravelotte was fought, and Bazaine's army driven back on Metz.

The Lines of the Saar, Moselle, and Meuse, and the Passes of the Vosges, being abandoned, and Bazaine surrounded at Metz, I shall now follow the fortunes of MacMahon, who had retreated to the camp at Châlons with the remnant of his shattered army, and had there been organizing the levies of Garde Mobile, and shall continue to narrate the movements of the forces under him up to the final catastrophe around Sedan.

The political situation was as follows:—On the 9th August the Ollivier Ministry resigned, and on the following day Count Palikao assumed the reins of the Government by command of the Emperor, who also on the 17th appointed General Trochu—famous for a work (published in 1867) advocating an immediate reform in the army—to be Governor of Paris, and Commander-in-Chief of the forces assembling for its defence.

On the 19th, the Empress Regent issued a decree, appointing a Defence Committee for Paris, constituted as follows:—General Trochu, President; Admiral Rigault de Genouilly, Baron Jerome David, Marshal Vaillant, Generals de Chaubaud la Tour, Guïod, d'Autemarre, d'Erville, and Soumain, Members; and a number of defensive works were commenced to complete the circle of forts surrounding the capital.

Meanwhile MacMahon having retreated through Saverne, had been collecting the remnant of his corps at Châlons, and had under his command about 140,000 men belonging to the corps of De Failly, Felix Douay, and Canrobert. He had also about 36,000 Garde Mobile, recently levied, and with so little discipline as to be almost a hindrance to his future movements. Their want of discipline had, in fact, infected the old soldiers, previously disposed to be insubordinate from their disorderly and hasty retreat, and from a want of confidence in their leaders, who had shown such culpable incapacity in the opening engagements of the campaign.

Irregularities and disorderly conduct prevailed in his camp, instead of the stern discipline and constant drill so necessary to bring his discouraged troops and raw levies to that standard of excellence which alone could have saved him from the final disaster to which he was rapidly drifting.

The troops spent their time in the baneful delirium of the concert rooms, and dancing saloons, and all the worst features of a large garrison town prevailed; while not a few publicly abused the Emperor and their own commanders, without any restraint being placed upon them, or any steps being taken to check the rapidly rising symptoms of insubordination.

Such was the state of things when the Emperor arrived at MacMahon's Head-Quarters, having but narrowly escaped the ubiquitous Germans in his retreat from Metz.

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There were two plans that then recommended themselves to the Emperor and MacMahon: one was to retreat towards Paris, harassing, if possible, the flank of the Crown Prince of Prussia's army; and the other was to attack the rear of the German armies investing Metz, and so, relieving Bazaine, possibly annihilate that portion of the enemy's forces, and catch the Crown Prince between the reunited French armies and the Army of Paris.

A council of war was held in the camp, and it was thereat determined to pursue the former course, and retreat on Paris, as the latter was considered too dangerous an experiment with the troops available, and with so determined and active an opponent as the Crown Prince.

The folly of the movements of an army in the field being directed, principally for political reasons, from the capital, instead of by those on the spot, able to judge, better than those at a distance, of the dispositions of the enemy, and of the materials they themselves have at their command, was now fully and unfortunately evinced.

The Empress Regent and the Ministry of Count Palikao directed MacMahon to proceed to the relief of Metz, and on no account to retreat on Paris, pointing out the danger the Emperor would incur should he return to the capital leaving Bazaine shut in around Metz.

MacMahon at first remonstrated, and breaking up the camp at Châlons, commenced on the 21st his march to Rheims, intending to retreat on Paris; writing at the

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same time to the Government, that it was necessary to rest and reorganize his army under the protection of the Paris forts, ere he could hope to offer any successful resistance to the rapidly advancing enemy.

He foresaw the extreme danger, so evident to the military student, of a flank march across a difficult country in such close proximity to so enterprising an enemy acting on interior lines. At all times, and under the most favourable circumstances, such a march would be made with imminent risk ; but in face of an enemy so active in his movements, so superior in point of numbers, with troops elated by recent successes, and with the knowledge of the inferiority of the morale and equipment of his own troops, MacMahon, though but a poor strategist at any time, saw the risk he would run, and felt the serious responsibility of giving in to the wishes of the Government, and of making the attempt.

That the Emperor also held the same views we now know from the contents of a pamphlet, since published at Brussels, purporting to be from the pen of one of the Imperial Head-Quarter Staff, but attributed to the Emperor, or written at his instigation, and there is but little doubt that its contents may be considered authentic.

The Emperor had at first wished to resume the reins of power in Paris, but had yielded to the wishes of the Regency that he would not do so.

He dissented, however, from the course proposed by the Empress Regent and the Government ; as from his knowledge, gained in the field, of the position,

numbers, and resources of the Germans, and seeing the condition of his own troops, he felt convinced that the proposed flank march was pregnant with dangers innumerable. Unfortunately, however, he failed to put his veto on the move, from what may now be considered a false notion, that he had no longer any right to interfere with the plans of those to whom after all he had only temporarily entrusted the Imperial power.

Had he used his authority to prevent the fatal flank march, the history of the campaign might have been very different; but he wavered, hesitated, and then resigned himself to his fate, showing again that fatal indecision and want of firmness which had characterized all his movements from the commencement of the campaign; and one can only attribute to sickness of body the want of *élan* and firmness that had previously been his *métier*.

Feeble in body, and borne down by the unexpected calamities that had so suddenly overtaken him, his mind wanted vigour, and accompanied by his son, thus early taught (poor child!) his first lesson in the rough school of adversity, and oppressed with anxiety for the future of his dynasty, the feeling of whose coming downfall already overshadowed him, he hampered the movements of the Marshal and his army, to whom his safety was an hourly anxiety, and carried with him, amidst his disheartened soldiers, not the martial presence (inspiring confidence) of the First Empire, but the idle pomp and state of the third, utterly out of place on such an occasion.

His carriages, horses, escorts, and baggage waggons blocked the road, and impeded the onward march, while the daily necessities of his numerous retinue trenched largely on the resources of the ill-managed Intendance.

Fallen greatness is always the object of our deepest sympathies, and no one more than myself feels for the Emperor, deserted in his hour of need by those who but yesterday hypocritically fawned upon him, and received (cap in hand) the favours he lavished on all but himself; and I trust I may not be deemed presumptuous in expressing the hope that he may soon again have it in his power to restore France to the high and prosperous position she so long maintained under the Imperial sway; but I cannot conclude this digression without giving it as my opinion that had the Emperor gone through the campaign, after the first reverses as a general, without the pomp of a sovereign, and shared more jealously the privations of his soldiers, not one but would have followed him cheerfully into his temporary captivity with feelings of devotion and respect.

The Government in Paris, wishing to encourage the Parisians with the hope that Bazaine could be released from Metz, and backed by the Privy Council, now issued imperative orders to MacMahon to advance to the relief of Metz, and by forced marches to traverse the passes of the Argonne, and crossing the Meuse, to operate from the line of Montmédy, Longuyon, and Thionville, against the rear of the German army investing Metz.

The language of reason was no longer understood in Paris, and MacMahon, yielding to the pressure put upon him by the Government, and fearing his objection to march to the relief of Bazaine might be attributed to personal jealousy, quitted Rheims with his army on the 22nd August, and marched towards Bethenville, on the Suippe, but his rear-guard did not clear Rheims till the following day.

The forces under the Marshal were composed of the remnant of his own 1st Corps (all veterans, of African experiences); of the 5th Corps, under De Failly; of the 7th Corps, under General Felix Douay; of the 12th Corps, composed of new regiments of reserve troops, and of marines; and of a portion of the cavalry of Canrobert's corps. Besides these he had about 500 field-pieces and mitrailleuses.

The soldiers were more or less disaffected, and the disgraceful plundering that took place on the departure of the army from Rheims, showed the utter want of discipline prevailing; in fact, the new levies were rather a source of weakness than of strength to the Marshal, as they straggled, and could not be persuaded to march at a fair pace; a most important point, when we consider the necessity there was for forced marches, if the enemy were to be successfully eluded.

The Intendance broke down immediately after starting, and MacMahon was forced to diverge in his march, so as to move along the line of railway; and he reached Rethel on the 24th, whither he had directed his route, in order to obtain the necessary

supplies for his troops, which were being hurried on by the railway from Mézières to Thionville, while the line was also employed to bring up reinforcements in the shape of new levies. His cavalry, and the larger portion of his guns, had, however, been sent on in advance towards Montmédy, by Suipe and Vouziers.

Meanwhile the Germans were rapidly advancing north-eastwards, and feeling their way all over the country; and such was the terror of the peasantry, that the presence of three or four Uhlans (German Lancers) was sufficient to cause a panic in a village, and all classes seemed paralyzed.

The main body of Prince Frederick Charles's army were surrounding Bazaine's army in and around Metz, and having entrenched themselves strongly, by the 23rd they had completed the investing circle.

The Crown Prince of Prussia was pushing forward towards Paris, and his advance guard reached the deserted Châlons on the 24th August. He was supported on his right by a portion of Prince Frederick Charles's army, about 80,000 strong, consisting of the 4th Corps, the 12th Saxons, and of the Prussian Guards under the command of the Crown Prince of Saxony, who swept the country along the Belgian frontier northwards, keeping parallel with the Crown Prince, and marching by Verdun and Meneshould.

The King of Prussia arrived on the 24th August at Ligny, where the Head-Quarters of the Crown Prince were established.

On the 25th the Crown Prince reached Bar-le-Duc,

when his advanced guard sent him the news that MacMahon had broken up his camp at Châlons, burnt his tents, and marching through Rheims, had struck off in a northerly direction.

According to Count Moltke's instructions the Crown Prince of Saxony was immediately directed to oppose MacMahon's march, and keep him in check, while the Crown Prince was to sweep round on his right flank, and throw him back on to the Belgian frontier.

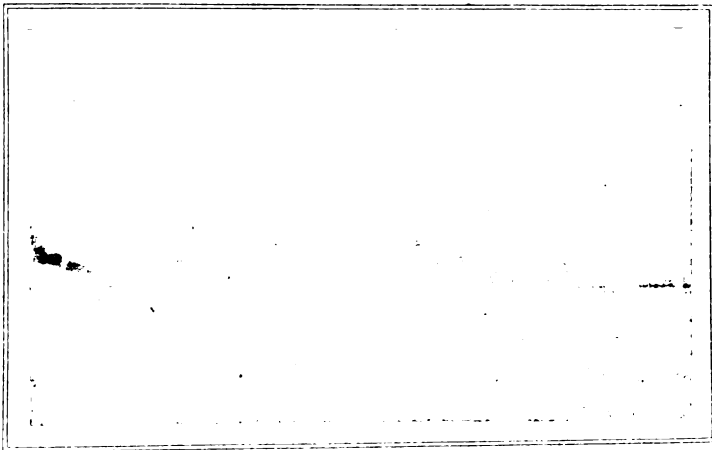
On the 26th the Crown Prince of Saxony was marching for Stenay on the Meuse, and the Crown Prince of Prussia was hurrying the 3rd Army on by forced marches to Clermont-en-Argonne and Grand Pré.

Meanwhile MacMahon had been advancing but slowly, whereas the only chance of success on his part lay in the rapidity of his movements, as, having a good start of the Crown Prince of Prussia, he might have engaged the Crown Prince of Saxony alone had he pushed on quickly, and, driving him back towards Metz, have enabled Bazaine to break the circle of investment, and thus have united the two French armies. But his heart was not in the march, and his troops were influenced by his slowness.

The Marshal had divided his army into three divisions; one of which, consisting of 20,000 men, proceeded by rail to Mézières, where it was to join a corps from Paris under General Vinoy, and to follow the other divisions as soon as they should have effected the passage of the Meuse. The other two divisions under MacMahon himself moved by two roads; one to



RAILWAY BRIDGE ACROSS THE MEUSE AT VILLETTE,
BLOWN UP BY THE FRENCH



MOUZON

the north by Stonne and Mouzon, the other to the south by Vouziers and Buzancy, both heading for Montmédy.

On the 27th, on reaching Le Chêne Populeux, MacMahon first ascertained the immediate danger of his position, and the near approach of the German armies. His first impulse was to retreat, and indeed he gave orders to that effect, but the Government again sent him orders to advance, and he yielded himself up to the necessity of carrying them out.

On the same date some Prussian outposts were driven back by the French near Vouziers; and at Buzancy the 12th Regiment of French Chasseurs was dispersed and fearfully cut up by the 3rd Cavalry, some of the 18th Uhlans, and a battery of Prussian guns.

On the 28th, the outposts were engaged at Dun, Stenay, and Mouzon; and Vouziers, an important junction of roads through the Argonnes, fell into German hands.

On the 29th, the village of Vrizy, occupied by Turcos, was taken by two squadrons of Prussian Hussars, and two officers of MacMahon's staff were taken into Grand Pré as prisoners by some Uhlans.

By the same date the Crown Prince of Saxony was in possession of both sides of the Meuse at Stenay, while the Crown Prince of Prussia was nearing the French right advance; thus MacMahon was threatened in flank and rear, his army being concentrated behind Stonne and Mouzon preparing to cross the Meuse, while he himself had his Head-Quarters at Raucourt.

By this time he was fully aware of the peril of his

position, and that the Crown Prince of Saxony was prepared to dispute his further advance towards Metz; while the probability of the Crown Prince of Prussia having turned off from his march on Paris, and being on his way to assist the Crown Prince of Saxony, necessitated his crossing the Meuse early next morning, and beating back the combined army without further loss of time. In despair, he felt the necessity of immediately playing his last card, and of trying to force the Germans back to the Moselle, feeling sure that, if defeated, he could retreat on Sedan and Mézières, and there holding his antagonists in check, delay their onward march to Paris till the National Guards and other levies should be ready for its defence. Meanwhile, he was hourly expecting stores and reinforcements of the 13th Corps, such as they might be, by the Northern railways of France, by way of St. Quentin, Avesnes, and Hirson, and he considered that the proximity of the Belgian frontier would make any attempt to turn his left flank futile.

Although his orders were peremptory, and counselled haste, still his slowness in carrying them out, on which doubtless the Government at Paris had not calculated, and the ignorance of strategy he as usual displayed, must, I think, to a certain extent condemn his movements in any history of the war. He had thrown away the position that promised most hope of success, namely, the line between Rethel and Mézières, whence, if beaten, he could have retreated to Laon and Soissons, and his retreat to Paris would probably have still been feasible; whereas his present line of

retreat could only be by Mézières and Sedan, if the Crown Prince of Prussia should remain ignorant of his movements, a hope which that commander's former proceedings by no means justified; or else through a corner of Belgium, in which case he would infringe its neutrality, and bring political complications on France which she was ill prepared to grapple with.

And here I think a sketch of the life and previous career of Marshal MacMahon will not be out of place. His name is Marie Edme Patrick Maurice MacMahon, and he is a descendant of a noble Celtic family, whose members fought in Ireland for the last of the Stuarts, and afterwards emigrated to France. He was born at the Château de Sully, near Autun, in the year 1808, and was educated at the seminary of that town. At seventeen he went to the military school of St. Cyr, and leaving it after two years with the rank of "sous-lieutenant élève," he joined the Staff School of Application.

He acted in Algeria in 1830 as orderly officer to General Achard, and distinguished himself in the first Medéah expedition, by carrying an important despatch through the Arabian army to Blidah. For this he received the cross of the Legion of Honour. In 1832 he was present at the siege of Antwerp, where he was promoted to the rank of Captain. In 1836, at the second siege of Constantine, in Algeria, he acted as Aide-de-Camp to General Damrémont, and being wounded, he received the rank of Officer of the Legion of Honour. Next we find him on the staff of General Changarnier, and in 1841 he was appointed to com-

mand a regiment of Chasseurs-à-pied, and assisted later in subduing the great Arab chief, Abd-el-Kader. In 1855 he replaced General Canrobert in the command of the 1st Division of the French Crimean army, and directed the attack on the Malakoff. In 1856 he became a senator. In 1857 and 1858 he commanded the Algerian forces. In 1859 he was engaged in the Italian campaign; on the 3rd June he gained a victory at Turbigo, and on the 4th turned the battle of Magenta into a victory for the arms of France. For this latter he was made a Marshal of France, and received the title of Duke of Magenta on the field of battle. In 1861 he went to Berlin as ambassador extraordinary. Shortly afterwards he was appointed Governor-General of Algeria. He also, for a season, commanded one of the summer camps of instruction at Châlons. He was always noted for his energy and personal courage, and made a splendid General of Division; but no event has yet shown his fitness to command an army, while his recent defeats have rather proved the contrary.

Early on the morning of the 30th, the French began to cross the Meuse, and Paris was cheered by the news, telegraphed by the Emperor, that two corps of MacMahon's army, having crossed in safety, were marching on Montmédy by way of Carignan, at which place he himself afterwards was present, during its occupation by the troops.

These two corps alluded to proceeded through Vaux to Carignan.

Hardly had they effected the passage of the river in safety, when the right wing, under De Failly, which was encamped north of Beaumont, and which had been thrown back facing south to cover the flank and rear of MacMahon's army during its passage of the Meuse, was surprised by the 1st Bavarian corps of the 3rd Army (Crown Prince of Prussia), which, apprised by its scouts of the presence of the enemy in its front, had under cover of the intervening woods advanced, and catching De Failly's corps unawares, routed it with severe loss; the tents, camp equipage, large quantities of baggage, and numerous prisoners falling into the victors' hands.

The 4th Prussian corps, forming the left of the combined army (Crown Prince of Saxony), was simultaneously advancing up the Meuse, and to the right of the 1st Bavarian corps.

The 5th Prussian corps was moving on Stonne, while the 11th was making for Chemery; and the 2nd Bavarians were supporting the advance.

The artillery cannonade above Beaumont had no sooner commenced, than the different advanced posts pushing forwards opened fire, and a general fusillade ensued.

De Failly's corps being routed, and his flank and rear exposed, MacMahon immediately ordered the troops on the west bank of the Meuse to retreat across the river, masking the move with great tactical skill, and the French fought gallantly on this occasion; but only a portion of them had reached the opposite bank,

when the 4th Corps, forming the left of the combined army, sweeping up the eastern bank from Stenay, and forming line, fell upon the French, already in great confusion from their hurried retreat at Mouzon, and utterly routed them with heavy loss.

About the same time the two French corps, which had crossed early in the day, and whose advance had already entered Carignan, were attacked by the 12th Corps of the combined army, supported by the Prussian Guards, and driven back across a small river called the Chiers, which runs north-west from Carignan, and empties itself into the Meuse near Remilly, and behind which they effected a junction with the remainder of MacMahon's army, which had evacuated Stonne and all its advanced posts, and fallen back along the eastern banks of the Meuse; so great indeed was the panic of the centre, that the troops threw away their arms and accoutrements, and the whole French army crossed the Chiers before the panic could in any way be checked, or any attempt at a more orderly retreat be made.

Night coming to their aid, found the French army behind the Chiers, between Douzy and Remilly; while the combined German army, and the 1st Bavarian corps of the 3rd Army, bivouacked on the ground that they had won,—the 4th Corps having taken several thousand prisoners and twelve cannon; the 12th, numerous prisoners and four mitrailleuses; and the 1st Bavarian corps, several prisoners, a few cannon, large quantities of baggage, and stores of different kinds.

The total French losses were estimated at 7,000 prisoners, besides the killed and wounded, and 20 guns. The result of the day was to stop MacMahon's advance to the south-east.

The main body of the 3rd Army, acting under instructions from General Moltke, which were carried out by its commander and General Blumenthal (Chief of his staff), had been engaged since the 26th in swinging round half-right on to the French line, and in performing a sort of right wheel on an extended circle, in order to throw back MacMahon's right, and cut him off from any retreat, unless he should choose to infringe the neutrality of Belgium. The positions of the corps in this strategical movement were similar to those shown on the small plan; and only one corps, the 6th, having the outer or most westerly portion of the circle to march on, was unable to arrive in time to take part in the engagements that led up to, and concluded in, the battle of Sedan; it marched, however, to its point diagonally, and was ready to guard the German left and to support the Württembergers if necessary.

Opposed to an active enemy commanding a well-organized army, this would have been a most dangerous manœuvre, as the German rear might have been attacked while the armies occupied so extended a line; but shrewdly guessing at the condition of his enemy's troops, and not believing in any such danger, the Crown Prince of Prussia swung his left round, and by the dogged pluck of his troops throughout the

forced marches, which were necessarily of the most fatiguing nature, succeeded in carrying out the strategical movement ordered by General Moltke; and in a great measure to the endurance and splendid marching of the 5th and 11th Corps, who had nearly the outer edge of the circle to traverse, and who marched twenty-five miles on the 30th, must be attributed the German success at Sedan.

During the 30th, with the exception of its right corps, the 1st Bavarians, who bore the brunt of the day so nobly, the troops of the 3rd Army were hardly engaged, except in trifling outpost skirmishes, as neither party was near each other in force; and the evening found them, wearied with their severe marches, occupying Beaumont, and bivouacking about Stonne and the country on either side of it.

The camp-fires, extending along a line from near Chemery, through Stonne, Beaumont, Mouzon, and Carignan, showed during the night of the 30th the positions held by the two German armies.

During the day the King of Prussia had sent the following telegram to the Queen at Berlin:—

“Varennnes, August 30th, 3.30 P.M.—We won a victorious battle yesterday. MacMahon was beaten by the 4th and 12th Saxon and the 1st Bavarian Army corps, and was driven back from Beaumont beyond the Meuse, near Mouzon. Twelve cannon and several thousand prisoners, together with a very large quantity of war matériel, are in our hands. Our losses are moderate. I am about to return to the battle-

field, to follow up the results of the victory. May God help us further in His mercy, as He has done hitherto."

During the 31st, both French and German commanders were making their dispositions for the supreme effort, and some desultory fighting took place between Douzy and Bazeilles.

The following telegram was also sent officially to Germany :—

"Varennnes, August 31st.—The results of yesterday's victory over Marshal MacMahon's army only become known gradually, in consequence of the great extent of the battle-field. Up to the present it is ascertained that some 20 cannons, 11 mitrailleurs, and about 7,000 prisoners have fallen into our hands."

The German plan for the next day arranged by Moltke was as follows: the combined army (4th) was to advance before nightfall, and occupy a new line on the Chiers; at the same time the 3rd Army was to occupy a position to a certain extent along the Meuse, and extending from Remilly on the right to Donchéry on the left. On the following morning (1st September) they were to engage the enemy at daybreak; the Crown Prince of Saxony was to cross the Chiers, and attacking the French in front, as soon as possible wheel round his right flank, turn their left, detaching a force from his extreme right to sweep round near the Belgian frontier under the cover of the woods, and effect a junction north-east of Sedan with a detachment of the 3rd Army, sent round by the

Crown Prince of Prussia, who would simultaneously engage the right centre of MacMahon's army at Bazeilles, and endeavour to overwhelm his right wing; when, if both the German armies should prove successful, the French army would be enveloped, and being hemmed in at Sedan, would have to surrender unconditionally. How ably and gallantly this plan was carried out in every particular is now a matter of history.

During the whole of the 31st the Germans were taking up the positions assigned to them, and marched along in review order, their knapsacks being carried on country carts and ambulances; the King of Prussia slept at Vendresse; the Crown Prince of Saxony moved his Head-Quarters to Villers-lez-Mouzon, and his right, consisting of the Prussian Guards, occupied the heights above Francheval. The Crown Prince of Prussia advanced his Head-Quarters to Chehery, though most of the correspondents named Chemery as his Head-Quarters, a place about three miles south of the former, to which similarity of names doubtless the mistake may be attributed. About 4 A.M. on the morning of the 1st September the German armies were, as nearly as can at present be ascertained, in the positions ascribed to them in the small plan.

MacMahon might have escaped with the greater portion of his army by rapid marching on the 31st, in the direction of Mézières, had he abandoned his baggage and such artillery as was not efficiently horsed; but he feared to risk a running fight with his dis-

heartened troops, and preferred offering battle to the enemy in the following position, which he took up, evidently expecting to be attacked in front and on the right flank; and which position both the Emperor and himself seem to have thought offered a fair chance of success.

His left rested on Givonne; and he considered his position in its vicinity so strong, from the heights surrounding it intersected by ravines and broken ground, and covered with dense forests, that he placed there his weakest troops, evidently believing that the natural obstacles and the proximity of the Belgian frontier would prevent his left flank being turned, or even seriously attacked. Thence his line extended to the Meuse by Balan, and Bazeilles, the key to his right centre, and which latter, from its being on the high road to Carignan and projecting rather beyond his line, he occupied in great force with his best troops; entrenching this line where he deemed it advisable, and placing his guns on such wooded eminences as he thought would best cover them, and enable them to catch the enemy at a disadvantage in the intervening valleys. His right was drawn up north of Sedan, protected by the Meuse and the western end of the fortress and town, and by the system of artificial inundations previously mentioned, and held the village of St. Menges and the plateaux and ridges of Floing and La Garenne.

Looking at all the circumstances of the case, and taking into consideration his determination not to

retreat without engaging the enemy, this was probably the best position he could have chosen. His line from Givonne to Bazeilles, on a series of wooded heights, intersected by three parallel ravines, running north and south from the Belgian frontier, two towards the Chiers, and the third close to Sedan towards the Meuse, with the Chiers between him and the bulk of the right of his enemy, formed a succession of formidable lines of defence; while the eminences near Floing and La Garenne, crowned with woods and villages, every one of which might be successively defended, with the Meuse, forming a double obstacle to be overcome by the Germans, made his right flank, as he thought, almost unassailable.

The strength of the position he thus took up does not in my opinion absolve the Marshal from the flagrant error in strategical judgment he undoubtedly committed in not retreating towards Mézières, and trying to engage and defeat the 3rd Army before the combined army could come to its assistance; and he had still possession of the railway to aid him in the attempt, had he essayed this early on the 31st. But having determined to fight in the positions he took up, I conceive his chief faults were: 1st, not having strong cavalry patrols along the road to the Belgian frontier; 2nd, not ascertaining more correctly the movements of the 3rd Army approaching his right; and 3rd, in not destroying the railway bridge across the Meuse near Bazeilles, by means of which the 1st Bavarians chiefly crossed; and this latter is the more

unaccountable as the other railway bridge at Villette was blown up by his orders. Further criticism on his movements I leave to the future historians of the campaign.

As far as can be at present ascertained, the number of the French troops engaged on the 1st of September was about 100,000, divided into four corps, and commanded as follows:—

1st Corps	..	..	..	General DUCROT,
5th	„	..	..	General DE WIMPFEN,
7th	„	..	..	General DOUAY,
12th	„	..	..	General LEBRUN,

with about 450 guns and mitrailleuses. Marshal MacMahon commanded in chief, while the Emperor was present, but without any definite command until the battle ceased.

Besides the above, one division of the French marched from Mézières to join in the battle, but after a short skirmish with the Würtemburgers retreated to that fortress.

The Germans were about 200,000 strong; for although General Moltke originally computed them at 240,000, yet we must remember that the 6th Corps took no part in the battle, and the 4th Corps was only partially engaged, and that after the hardest portion of the action was finished. The King commanded in person; while the 3rd Army, composed of the 1st and 2nd Bavarian corps, the Würtemburger division, and the 5th and 11th Corps, besides a large force of cavalry, was under the Crown Prince of Prussia; and

the 4th or combined army, consisting of the 4th and 12th Corps and of the Prussian Guards (the 4th Grenadier regiment of which lost 500 men out of a thousand), was under the Crown Prince of Saxony. From 600 to 700 guns were divided amongst these two armies.

On the King of Prussia's staff were, amongst others, Generals von Moltke and von Roon, and Count Bismarck; Generals Sheridan and Forsyth, of the United States army; and the correspondent of the 'Pall Mall Gazette.'

Accompanying the Crown Prince of Prussia were the Dukes of Augustenberg and Coburg Gotha, and the Princes of Weimar, Mecklenburg, Würtemberg, and Hohenzollern, and the correspondent of the 'Daily News.'

Early on the morning of the 1st the French and German armies were nearly in the positions shown in the small plan, and under cover of a thick fog the combined army crossed the Chiers in safety unperceived, and the 1st Bavarian corps made the passage of the Meuse unopposed, partly by the railway bridge and partly on pontoons; and effecting a junction with the left of the combined army, advanced to the attack of Bazeilles.

At the same time the 5th and 11th Corps of the 3rd Army were marching northwards to get round the bend of the Meuse, and then attack St. Menges and the troops in position behind Floing and the woods of La Garenne.

The cavalry under Count Stolberg were massed

west of the Meuse, under cover of some hills, and out of cannon-shot range; and the 2nd Bavarian corps was advancing to occupy the commanding hills south of Sedan and of the Meuse, accompanied by a powerful artillery.

The King of Prussia and his staff took up a position on a hill above the village of Cheveuge; and the Crown Prince of Prussia on an eminence half a mile off to the west, in front of a newly-built château overlooking Donchéry, in which respective positions both remained nearly the whole day.

Before 6 A.M., only a few shots were fired, but the fog lifting about that hour, the Bavarians commenced a heavy cannonade, and the sun shone down mockingly on the effects of man's ambition below.

To describe the battle with the meagre details at command is beyond my pen, but I subjoin the general features of it, and trust in conjunction with the large sketch they may enable my readers to form some idea of the principal tactics on both sides, which resulted in the overthrow of the French under the walls of Sedan.

The first position marked in the large sketch represents the ground occupied by both armies about noon, when the closing in had succeeded, and the desired junction between the two German armies taken place; while the second position shows the final disposition of both sides at the close of the battle.

Soon after 6 A.M. the action became general, and the 11th Corps forced its way into St. Menges, under cover of a heavy Prussian cannonade from a battery

splendidly served posted on ground commanding the village of Floing; and the 5th Corps slowly but gradually crept round through Fleigneux and Illy, north-west of Sedan.

The 2nd Bavarians meanwhile were throwing quantities of concussion shells into the troops defending Balan and Bazeilles, already on fire in several places, and which latter the 1st Bavarians were attacking gallantly in front, while it was as gallantly defended, principally by marines, and a very serious fight ensued for its possession.

The 4th German corps was rapidly coming up in support, while the 12th Corps to the right was attacking the defenders of the line of Givonne, Daigny, and La Moncelle. Behind this latter corps, in reserve, were the Prussian Guards, covering the road to Carignan and Montmédy.

Soon after nine a heavy artillery fire was going forward along the whole attack, and the French left near Givonne was turned by the combined army, and beaten back panic-stricken into the woods, and the Germans pushed their right rapidly round in a north-westerly direction.

By this time, however, the 1st Bavarians and 12th Saxons were undergoing a very heavy fire of musketry and mitrailleuses, and shortly before eleven the grunt of the latter, and the sharp rattle of the former became one continued roll, showing how well the French appreciated the importance of holding Bazeilles.

On the German left the battery near Floing had

silenced two French batteries opposed to it, and, no longer supported by their guns, the infantry evacuated Floing, and soon after were forced to retreat still nearer to Sedan, owing to the numberless effective shells which burst amongst their ranks, pitched by a Prussian battery at St. Menges.

At twelve noon the long-desired junction was effected between the Crown Prince of Prussia's left and the Crown Prince of Saxony's right, and from that moment the result of the day could no longer be in doubt; and though numberless moves of troops were subsequently made, every change was limited to so confined a space as not to be worthy of being chronicled.

Soon after this, some of the French began to retreat from Bazeilles, while others were going to support its defenders through the woods of La Garenne. At one o'clock the 11th Corps advanced to take the hill north-west of La Garenne, and was received by a heavy artillery fire from the French batteries on the edge of the wood.

Describing the attack at this position of the line, and what followed, the correspondent of the 'Pall Mall Gazette' writes:—

"At 1.5 yet another French battery near the wood opened on the Prussian columns, which were compelled to keep shifting their ground till ready for their final rush at the hill, in order to avoid offering so good a mark to the French shells. Shortly after we saw the first Prussian skirmishers on the crest of the La Garenne hill above Torcy. They did

not seem in strength, and General Sheridan standing beside me exclaimed, 'Ah! the beggars are too weak, they can never hold that position against all those French.' The General's prophecy soon proved correct, for the French advancing at least six to one, the Prussians were forced to retire down the hill, to seek reinforcements from the columns which were hurrying to their support. In five minutes they came back again, this time in greater force, but still terribly inferior to the huge French columns. 'Good heavens! the French Cuirassiers are going to charge them,' said General Sheridan; and sure enough the regiment of Cuirassiers, their helmets and breast-plates flashing in the September sun, form up in sections of squadrons, and dash down on the Prussian scattered skirmishers. Without deigning to form line—squares are never used by the Prussians—the infantry received the Cuirassiers with a most tremendous '*schnell-feuer*' (quick fire), at about 108 yards, loading and firing as fast as possible into the dense squadrons. Over went men and horses by hundreds, and the regiment was compelled to retire much faster, it seemed to me, than it came. The moment the Cuirassiers turned bridle the plucky Prussians actually dashed in hot pursuit after them at the double. Such a thing has not often been recorded in the annals of war. The French infantry then came forward in turn and attacked the Prussians, who waited quietly under a most rapid firing of chassépôts, until their enemies got within about 100 yards, when they gave them such a dose of lead that the infantry soon followed the cavalry to the 'place from which they came'—that is, behind a ridge some 600 yards on the way to Sedan, where the tirailleurs could not hit them. The great object of the Prussians was gained, as they were not dispossessed of the crest of the hill, and it was fair betting that they would do all that in them lay to get some artillery up to help them before Napoleon III. was much nearer his deposition. 'There will be a h— of a fight for that crest,' says Sheridan, peering through

his field-glass at the hill, which was not three miles from where we stood, with the full fire on it from behind us. At half-past one the French cavalry, this time I fancy a regiment of Carabineers, made another attempt to dislodge the Prussians, who were being reinforced every minute. But they met with the same fate as their brethren in the iron jackets, and were sent with heavy loss to the rightabout, the Prussians taking advantage of their flight to advance their line a couple of hundred yards nearer the French infantry. Suddenly they split into two bodies, leaving a break of a hundred yards in their line. We were not long in seeing the object of this movement, for the little white puffs from the crest behind the skirmishers, followed by a commotion in the dense French masses, show us that '*ces diables de Prussiens*' have contrived, Heaven only knows how, to get a couple of 4-pounders up the steep ground, and have opened on the French. Something must have at this point been very wrong with the French infantry, for instead of attacking the Prussians—whom they still outnumbered by at least two to one—they remained in column on the hill, seeing their only hope of retrieving the day vanishing from before their eyes, without stirring. The cavalry then tried to do a little Balaklava business, but without the success of the immortal six hundred. We *took* the guns in the Balaklava valley. Down came the Cuirassiers once more, this time riding straight for the two field-pieces. But before they had got within 200 yards of the guns the Prussians formed line as if on parade, and, waiting till they were within fifty yards, gave them a volley which seemed to us to destroy almost the whole of the leading squadron, and so actually block up the way to the guns for the next ones following. After this last charge, which was as complete a failure—although most gallantly conceived and executed—as the two preceding ones, the infantry fell back rapidly towards Sedan, and in an instant the whole hill was covered by swarms of Prussian tirailleurs, who appeared to rise from the ground. After the last des-

perate charge of the French cavalry, General Sheridan remarked to me, 'I never saw anything so reckless, so utterly foolish, as that last charge—it was sheer murder.'

"The Prussians, after the French infantry fell back, advanced rapidly, so much so that the retreating squadrons of French cavalry turned suddenly round and charged desperately once again. But it was all no use. The days of breaking squares or even lines are over, and the 'thin blue line' soon stopped the Gallic onset. It was most extraordinary that the French had neither artillery nor mitrailleurs—especially these latter—on the hill to support their infantry. The position was a most important one, and certainly worth straining every nerve to defend. One thing was clear enough, that the French infantry, after once meeting the Prussians, declined to try conclusions with them again, and that the cavalry were trying to encourage them by their example. About two, more Prussian reinforcements came over the long-disputed hill between Torcy and Sedan, to reinforce the regiments already established there.

"All the time that this great conflict was going on 'under Fritz's eyes' and those of your correspondent, another was proceeding, none the less severe, and as murderous for the Bavarians as the one I have attempted to describe was for the French. If there was a want of mitrailleurs on the hill above Torcy, there was certainly none in the Bazeilles ravine. On that side there was for more than an hour one continuous roar of musketry and mitrailleurs, and the Bavarian officers told me on the 2nd that the loss in their regiments was terrific, the mitrailleurs having made lanes in their columns. At 2.5 P.M. the French totally abandoned the hill between Torcy and Sedan, and fell back on the faubourg of Cazal, just outside the ramparts of the town. 'Now the battle is lost for the French,' says General Sheridan, to the great delight of the Prussian officers. One would almost have fancied that the French had heard his words, for they had hardly been uttered before there was a lull in the firing all

along the line, or rather circle, as it has now become. Count Bismarck took advantage of this to come and have a talk with his English and American friends. I was anxious to know what the Federal Chancellor had done about the threatened neutrality of Belgium, and my curiosity was soon gratified. 'I have told the Belgian Minister of War,' said Count Bismarck, 'that so long as the Belgian troops do their utmost to disarm any number of French soldiers who may cross the frontier, I will strictly respect the neutrality of Belgium; but if, on the contrary, the Belgians, either through negligence or inability, do not disarm and capture every man in French uniform who sets his foot in their country, we shall at once follow the enemy into neutral territory with our troops, considering that the French have been the first to violate the Belgian soil. I have been down to have a look at the Belgian troops near the frontier,' added Herr von Bismarck, 'and I confess they do not inspire me with a very high opinion of their martial ardour or discipline. Why, when they have their great-coats on one can see a great deal of paletôt, but hardly any soldier.' I asked his Excellency whether he thought the Emperor was in Sedan. 'Oh, no,' was the reply, 'Napoleon is not very wise, but he is not quite so foolish as to put himself in Sedan just now.' For once in his life Count Bismarck was wrong.

"At 2.45 the King came by where I was standing, saying he thought the French were going to try and break out just beneath us, in front of the 2nd Bavarian corps. At ten minutes to four General Sheridan told me that Napoleon and 'Loulou' were in Sedan. No one, however, believed this.

"At 3.20 the Bavarians below us not only continue to get inside the fortifications of Sedan, but maintain themselves there, wending their way forward from house to house.

"About four there was a great fight for the possession of the ridge above Bazailles. That gone, Sedan was swept on all sides by the Prussian cannon. This point of vantage was carried by the Prussians at 4.40, and from that moment there

could not be a shade of doubt as to the ultimate fate of Sedan."

Dr. Russell, writing to 'The Times,' vividly describes the same scene, as well as the fighting at Bazeilles and Balan, in the following words:—

"The Prussians coming up from Floing were invisible to me. Never can I forget the sort of agony with which I witnessed those who first came out on the plateau raising their heads and looking around for an enemy, while, hidden from view, a thick blue band of French infantry was awaiting them, and a brigade of cavalry was ready on their flank below. I did not know that Floing was filled with advancing columns. There was but a wide, extending, loose array of skirmishers, like a flock of rooks, on the plateau. Now the men in front began to fire at the heads over the bank lined by the French. This drew such a flash of musketry as tumbled over some and staggered the others; but their comrades came scrambling up from the rear, when suddenly the first block of horse in the hollow shook itself up, and the line, in beautiful order, rushed up the slope. The onset was not to be withstood. The Prussians were caught *en flagrant délit*. Those nearest the ridge slipped over into the declivitous ground; those in advance, running in vain, were swept away. But the impetuosity of the charge could not be stayed. Men and horses came tumbling down into the road, where they were disposed of by the Prussians in the gardens, while the troopers on the left of the line, who swept down the lane in a cloud of dust, were almost exterminated by the infantry in the village. There was also a regular cavalry encounter, I fancy, in the plains below, but I cannot tell at what time; the Cuirassiers, trying to cut their way out, were destroyed, and a charge of two Prussian squadrons, which did not quite equal expectations, occurred. The feat of these unfortunate cavaliers only cleared the plateau for a little time. In a few minutes up

came the spiked helmets again over the French *épaulement*, crossing their sabred comrades, and therefore all alive to the danger of cavalry. They advanced in closer order, but still skirmishing, and one long, black parallelogram was maintained to rally on. As the skirmishers got to the ridge they began to fire, but the French in the second line of *épaulement* soon drove them back by a rattling fusillade. The French rushed out of the *épaulement* in pursuit, still firing. At the same moment a splendid charge was executed on the Prussians, before which the skirmishers rallied, on what seemed to me to be still a long parallelogram. They did not form square. Some Prussians too far on were sabred. The troopers, brilliantly led, went right onwards in a cloud of dust; but when they were within a couple of hundred yards of the Prussians, one simultaneous volley burst out of the black front and flank, which enveloped all in smoke. They were steady soldiers who pulled trigger there. Down came horse and man; the array was utterly ruined. There was left in front of that deadly infantry but a heap of white and grey horses—a terrace of dead and dying and dismounted men and flying troopers, who tumbled at every instant. More total dissipation of a bright pageantry could not be. There was another such scene yet to come. I could scarce keep the field-glass to my eyes as the second and last body of cavalry—which was composed of light horse also—came thundering up out of the hollow. They were not so bold as the men on the white horses, who fell, many of them at the very line of bayonets. The horses of these swerved as they came upon the ground covered with carcasses, and their line was broken; but the squadron leaders rode straight to death. Once again the curling smoke spurted out from the Prussian front, and to the rear and right and left flew the survivors of the squadrons. The brown field was flecked with spots of many colours, and, trampling on the remains of that mass of strength and courage of man and horse, the Prussians, to whom supports were fast hastening up right and left and

rear, pressed on towards the inner *épaulement*, and became engaged with the French infantry, who maintained for some time a steady rolling fire in reply to the volleys of the Prussians. To me the French force seemed there very much superior in number. But they had lost courage, and what was left of it was soon dissipated by the advance of a Prussian battery, which galloped up to the right flank of their infantry, and opened a very rapid fire, to which there was no French battery to reply. The French left the *épaulement*, and made for a belt of wood, dropping fast as they retreated, but facing round and firing still. In a few moments more the plateau was swarming with the battalions of the 11th Corps, and the struggle there was over. Only for a minute, however, because, from the flanks of the wood came out a line of French infantry. The musketry fire was renewed; but it was evident the Prussians were not to be gainsaid. Their advance was only checked that they might let their artillery play while their columns assisted it by incessant volleys. A fierce onslaught by the French, made after they had retired behind the wood, only added to their losses. The Crown Prince's army, notwithstanding the cavalry success at the outset, had by three o'clock won the key of the position of the French right with comparatively small loss.

"The Bavarians of Von der Tann's corps, on whom devolved the difficult task of carrying the village or town of Bazeilles, and Balan (a suburb of Sedan outside the fortifications), suffered enormously. They were exposed to a fire of infantry in the houses, and to the guns of the works and the musketry from the parapets. The inhabitants joined in the defence, and as soon as the Bavarians had crossed the Meuse by their pontoons and by the railway bridge, they could receive but little protection from their artillery placed on the heights. The French made the most strenuous attempts to repulse them, in which the marines were particularly distinguished; and three divisions of Bavarians, which began to fight at four o'clock, were exposed to three distinct onslaughts from

the town and from the corps under the walls. At one time it appeared as if they would be overpowered, although it seemed as if success against them would scarcely have secured the French army from its ultimate fate.

"It is believed by the Bavarians that MacMahon himself was wounded very early in the day, when directing his troops in an offensive movement against Bazeilles. General Ducrot then took command of the whole army, but General de Wimpffen, producing a sealed letter, showed that he was authorized to assume the control of the operations of the army in case of any accident to Marshal MacMahon. The Marshal was wounded early in the morning, and, according to the reports of French officers, prisoners of the Bavarians, there was a difference of opinion between General Ducrot and General Wimpffen respecting the plan of attack which the French adopted at one period of the day as the best means of defence. Having beaten the Bavarians out of Balan at one time, the French made a rush in the direction of Illy, as if determined to cut their way through on the flank of the Saxon army, and pass towards Metz. But the Crown Prince of Saxony had by that time resumed the offensive, and had brought an overwhelming force to block their way. They were driven back, delivering the Bavarians from the stress to which they had been exposed. Their divisions advanced once more, and Bazeilles, or as much as remained of it, was firmly occupied; but the fight about Balan lasted much later.

"Here it was, according to Bavarian reports, that the Emperor, declaring that he only served as a private soldier, went with an attacking column composed of the remnants of various regiments, to drive out the Bavarians. But the artillery on the heights above the river and the cross-fire from the heights above the road were too much for troops shaken by incessant fighting and frightful losses. Shell and shot rained fast about the Emperor, one of the former bursting close to his person and enveloping him in its smoke. The

officers around entreated him to retire, and the Bavarians quickly following occupied Balan and engaged the French on the glacis of the fort. I cannot say whether this was previous to the period referred to by General Wimpffen in his address to the army. He speaks therein of a supreme moment when it was necessary to make a final effort and cut their way through the masses of the enemy at any hazard. But of all that great host of 90,000 men, there were only 2,000, he says, left who answered to the appeal. Of the remainder, there were probably 20,000 in the hands of the Prussians; but 60,000 men, deducting killed and wounded, had by this time become an utterly disorganized mass, without cohesion, 'willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,' and crushed out of all semblance of military vitality by an overwhelming and most murderous artillery, of which the moral effect was at least as great as the physical. The bitterness of recrimination between officers and men shows that long before the battle a radical element of force was wanting. There was not only a deficiency of cordial relations in their kind between the officer and the soldier, but a worse evil still—an actual apprehension on the part of the officers of those whom they were to command, a fear to enforce the ordinary rules of discipline, lest the soldier should become unmanageable altogether. The scene cannot be either imagined or described which occurred when the army, or that uniformed rabble, had been fairly driven in by the beaters, to be shot down at will. The French artillery had practically ceased to exist as a protecting arm. The guns on the works are ridiculously small ordnance of the date of 1815, with a few heavy pieces here and there; and Sedan, commanded completely from the south bank of the Meuse, was to all intents and purposes an open town, with the inconvenience of having a walled *enceinte* to embarrass the movements of the troops. The Emperor retired, I believe, within the place, but not, surely, for safety, but rather to escape from the surging mass of impotent soldiery. There was a rain of Prussian and

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BAZELLES



BAZELLES

Bavarian bombs upon the town, filled with terrified citizens who had had no time to escape. The troops outside had been fighting without food since the morning, and there were no resources within the city to meet their wants. They were in an angry and terrible mood, upbraiding their officers, mutinous; and every shell that fell increased the evil of their spirit. To one of many missiles was now reserved a great mission. A shell fell into a warehouse or manufactory in which was stored some inflammable material. A vast volume of flame rushed for a moment into the air, and a volume of thick white smoke, which towered and spread out so as to overshadow half the city, gave rise to apprehension on one side and expectation on the other that some central magazine had gone up. But no noise ensued. Still, at the moment, the resolve was taken that Sedan and all that it contained should be placed in the power of the victor, in the belief that it was impossible to resist with any prospect but that of ruin, complete, however lingering."

Another writer describes the cruelty of the Bavarians to the inhabitants and defenders of Bazeilles; out of which they were driven several times by the gallantry of the French marines. Almost to this day the place remains a heap of ruins. The observer alluded to writes :—

"Bazeilles was near the Meuse, and near Sedan: the inhabitants of the village, on hearing of the arrival of the enemy in the neighbourhood, donned their National Guards uniforms, and tried to hold in check a Bavarian corps, and a division of Prussian reserves. The French were driven back, and the Prussians entered the town; it was said that shots were fired from the windows of private houses upon the Prussian troops; be this as it may, it is certain that a scene of horror, and nameless excesses then commenced, that must

for ever disgrace their perpetrators. In order to punish the inhabitants of the village for presuming to defend themselves, they set fire to the place. The population sought refuge in the cellars. All—women and children—were burnt alive! Out of 2,000 inhabitants, barely 300 survived to relate how the Bavarians drove the women and children back into the flames, and shot those who succeeded in escaping. A description of the village after the Prussians left was sickening—there was not a house standing. A fearful smell of charred flesh pervaded the air, and the calcined bones of the inhabitants lay on the thresholds of their own dwelling.”

Although the Germans were now everywhere victorious, and were holding all the entrances into the town, still their batteries continued to bombard it, now so full of troops and material as to be indefensible, and set fire to it in several places; at five o'clock P.M. the firing ceased, and soon afterwards a French colonel, escorted by two Uhlans, one of whom carried a white flag, rode up to where the King had taken up his position, and asked for terms of surrender. After a short consultation between the King and General Moltke, the French colonel was informed that when the capitulation of so large an army and of so important a fortress were in question, an officer of higher rank should have been sent. “You are therefore to return to Sedan, and tell the Governor of the town to report himself immediately to the King of Prussia. If he does not arrive in an hour, our guns will open again; you may tell the Commandant that it is useless trying to obtain other terms than unconditional surrender.”

Soon after his departure, the King sent Colonel Broussart into Sedan with his demand for the capitulation, who, on his arrival, was introduced to the Emperor, who wished to give him a letter for the King; on learning his mission, however, Napoleon referred him to General de Wimpffen, who was in command (MacMahon having been severely wounded early in the day by a piece of shell), and sent his Adjutant, General Reille, with the letter to the King.

About seven o'clock Colonel Broussart returned, and informed the King of MacMahon's being wounded, and of the presence of the Emperor in Sedan: the King's escort then drew up in line, and the King, in front of his staff, received General Reille, who, dismounting, handed the Emperor's letter to His Majesty, saying, at the same time, that he had no other orders. King William having said, "But I demand, as the first condition, that the army lay down its arms," commenced reading the Imperial letter, since become famous, and very remarkable, when we consider its result. It ran as follows:—

"Ne pouvant pas mourir à la tête de mon armée, je viens mettre mon épée aux pieds de votre Majesté."

"Being unable to die at the head of my army, I lay my sword at the feet of your Majesty."

The King, after consulting with the Crown Prince of Prussia, who had previously joined him, and with Count Bismarck and Generals Moltke and von Roon, wrote as follows:—

"SIRE, MY BROTHER,

"Before SEDAN, *September 1st*, 1870.

"Regretting the circumstances under which we meet, I accept the sword of your Majesty, and I invite you to designate one of your officers provided with full powers to treat for the capitulation of the army which has so bravely fought under your command. On my side I have named General Moltke for this purpose.

"I am,

"Your Majesty's good Brother,

(Signed) "WILHELM."

The King handed the above to General Reille, who received it bareheaded, and then returned to Sedan, escorted by the two Uhlans.

On his departure the King gave General Moltke power to negotiate, and ordered Count Bismarck to be at hand in case of political complications, and then drove to his quarters at Vendresse, amid the cheers of his soldiers.

While giving the King, General Moltke, and the army, the credit of the success of the day, Count Bismarck is reported to have claimed some credit for effecting the unity of so many of the German races, who had that day made common cause, and fought side by side against the enemy in defence of the fatherland.

The Germans celebrated this great victory by impromptu candle illuminations and the singing of the usual patriotic airs; but their leaders, discussing the chances of the future, felt that there might yet be

many a hard day's fighting before peace would be declared.

The situation of the French at the conclusion of the day, and while the bearer of the flag of truce was proceeding to the German Head-Quarters, is shown in the 2nd position on the large sketch; the town was entirely surrounded by the Germans, whose well-served guns, carrying with murderous effect over 4,900 mètres, planted on all the surrounding heights, dominated the place, and could have shelled it so that hardly a house would have been left standing; while the defeated French soldiers, crushed into the narrow streets with no longer any organization, were perfectly demoralized, and exasperated by their bloody but useless struggles, were ripe for mischief and much more dangerous to friend than foe. The scene in the town was, I have heard from several of the inhabitants, of the most harrowing description: dead horses and men encumbered the ground; and horses, limbers, guns, caissons, and baggage-waggons all pell-mell, broke the surging mass of soldiers, who wandered about indiscriminately, drunk and cursing their leaders and officers, whom they threatened to assassinate. Under such circumstances what course remained open to the Emperor and his advisers but that which His Majesty wisely and humanely took?

General de Wimpffen had assumed the command of the French army when MacMahon was wounded, although the Marshal had given General Ducrot, in presence of the Emperor, orders to mass the troops

behind Sedan and retreat on Mézières; whether he had orders from Paris to that effect or not is not yet ascertained, but General de Wimpffen took the command, some say under the plea of being the older general of the two, and considering the proposed retreat a false move, rashly commanded an advance, with what result we well know. That he was not wanting in courage is evident from the attempt he made to rally the troops: crying out that Bazaine was attacking the Prussians in rear, he rallied a few thousand soldiers, and, leaving by the Porte de Balan, attacked the church garrisoned by the Prussians, who were at last taken prisoners owing to the doors being blown in by cannon, but he and his party were soon driven back into the town. Probably fresh from Africa, and full of the military traditions learnt there, and ignorant of the really inefficient and demoralized state of his troops, he thought that a good dash would restore victory to the French arms; but he counted without his host, and numberless killed and prisoners, and the immediate fatal consequences of his defeat, testify to his rashness and incompetence as a great leader; and if his name—as he is reported to have said it would—goes down to history linked with so humiliating a capitulation as he subsequently signed, he must remember that such a fate is not wholly undeserved; his wilfulness in arrogating to himself the command after MacMahon was wounded, and his rashness in counter-ordering the wise retreat the Marshal had directed, deprive him of the sympathy he would

otherwise have been entitled to, and leave him without a word of defence.

The conduct of the Emperor during the battle, and amid such trying scenes, has won him the good report of those who were impartial witnesses of it. He was among his troops, encouraging them all the morning, heedless of the projectiles which fell around him, and visited several of the corps in the centre, including that of Lebrun at Balan, and re-entered the town in the belief that all was going on favourably. Later on he essayed to leave it, but found his exit prevented by the retreating soldiers and waggons; and a shell bursting under his horse in the Place Turenne killed the horse of a general behind him, but any emotion he may have then shown was not that of fear. A general, too, was killed in a café close by him (probably General Guyot de Lespars), and the waiter (still there) was struck by a piece of the same shell, but not killed. Finding he could not leave the town, Napoleon retired to the Sub-Prefecture, where, after ordering the capitulation and writing to the King of Prussia, he passed the night doubtless a prey to bitter thoughts, on which, however, it is no business of mine to speculate.

At five o'clock on the morning of the 2nd, Napoleon, accompanied by a few of his staff, quitted Sedan in one of his carriages, and proceeded towards Donchéry in search of Count Bismarck, who, warned by an officer of his advent, dressed and hastened out to meet him. The Count, in his undress uniform, met,

cap in hand, the Emperor, who alighted; saying, on being requested to resume it, "Sire, I receive your Majesty as I would my own Royal Master." Escorted by the Count on horseback, the Emperor drove towards Donchéry, and stopping the carriage near that town, alighted, and entered in company with the Count a weaver's house; but shortly afterwards came and sat outside, and a long conversation ensued, conducted principally in German at the wish of the Emperor, who was aware that Count Bismarck was no great French linguist.

The Emperor tried to obtain a favourable capitulation for his army, but Bismarck would not entertain the question at all, which, he said, being a purely military one, was in the hands of Generals Moltke and de Wimpffen. The Chancellor, however, proposed negotiations for peace; but the Emperor, as a prisoner, expressed his inability to enter into any, and referred him to the Executive authority at Paris, which alone was empowered to entertain any such proposals. The Emperor also submitted to Bismarck the question as to the practicability of allowing the French army to cross the Belgian frontier, there to be disarmed and interned; this question had, however, been propounded the previous evening, and negatived by General Moltke. It is believed that the Emperor deplored the misfortune of the war, and stated that, though not desiring it himself, he had been forced by public opinion in France to declare it. The Emperor wished very much to have an interview with the King before



HOUSE IN FRONT OF WHICH
THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON AND BISMARCK CONVERGED



PARK OF GUNS, MITRAILLEUSES &c. AT SEDAN,
TAKEN FROM THE FRENCH

the capitulation should have been signed, but the Chancellor demanded its signature first, as it was the King's wish to leave his officers to settle the terms with the French Generals, reserving for a subsequent personal interview merely such matters as would directly affect the Emperor.

Count Bismarck then went to confer with the King, and the Emperor, escorted by a detachment of the 1st Prussian Cuirassiers, and attended by some of his staff, went to the Château Bellevue, belonging to a M. Amour, of Sedan, and prettily situated above the village of Frenois, on a wooded knoll sloping towards Sedan in the front, and behind towards the Meuse, from which it is about fifty yards distant: being surrounded by a small plantation and a pleasure ground, it possesses the advantage of seclusion, an object Napoleon much desired, as he wished to avoid the observation of his countrymen.

According to the best authorities, the capitulation was settled and signed by Generals Moltke and de Wimpffen in the same château. The terms proposed by General Moltke were considered very hard by De Wimpffen; but though the French troops were furious at the idea of any capitulation at all, the terms eventually accepted by their commander were quite justifiable, when the position of the French is considered. The town was commanded by numerous batteries placed on the surrounding heights, which would have rained a perfect tempest of shot and shell on the exposed town, whose streets were crowded with

masses of disorganized troops, horses, guns, and matériel, had the question been unsettled at noon. The town could have offered no resistance, and the troops still in the suburbs outside the gates must have been annihilated. De Wimpffen, while deploring his misfortune in having to sign such a document so shortly after his return from Algeria, yet seeing the impossibility of further defence, and the useless and sanguinary results that a continuance of the fighting would entail, subscribed to the capitulation, of which the following is the text:—

“FRENCH, *September 2nd, 1870.*

“Between the undersigned, the Chief of the Staff of King William, commanding-in-chief the German armies, and the General Commandant of the French army, both being provided with full powers from their Majesties King William and the Emperor Napoleon, the following convention has been concluded:—

“Article 1.—The French army placed under the orders of General Wimpffen, finding itself actually surrounded by superior forces round Sedan, are prisoners of war.

“Article 2.—Seeing the brave defence of this French army, exemption is made in respect of all the generals and officers, and also of the superior *employés* having the rank of officers, who pledge their word of honour in writing not to bear arms against Germany, nor to act in any manner against its interests until the close of the present war. The officers and *employés* who accept these conditions will retain their arms and personal effects.

“Article 3.—All arms as well as the matériel of the army, consisting of flags, eagles, cannon, ammunition, &c., shall be immediately delivered at Sedan to a military commission appointed by the General-in-Chief, in order to be forthwith handed over to German commissaries.



FRONT VIEW OF CHATEAU BELLEVUE.



NORTH VIEW OF CHATEAU BELLEVUE.

"Article 4.—The town and fortified works of Sedan shall be given up in their present condition, at latest, on the evening of the 2nd of September, and be subject to the disposition of His Majesty King William.

"Article 5.—Those officers who shall not have accepted the engagement set forth in Article 2, together with the disarmed troops, shall be marched out, ranged according to their regiments or corps, in military order. This proceeding will commence on the 2nd of September, and will terminate on September 3. These detachments will be marched to the districts bordering upon the Meuse, near Iges, to be handed over to German commissaries by their officers, who will then resign their commands to their sub-officers. The chief surgeons, without exception, will remain behind to attend to the wounded.

"VON MOLTKE,
"WIMPFEN."

The capitulation signed, General Moltke went to the battle-field, where at noon he met the King, who at eight o'clock having received no news at Vendresse, drove, according to previous agreement, to the place of rendezvous.

Having notified his intention of paying his captive a visit, the King, accompanied by his staff and by the Crown Prince of Prussia, and escorted by cavalry, started about half-past twelve for the château, where he arrived a few minutes later.

The Emperor received his conqueror with grave politeness, and seemed perfectly calm; after a few moments' conversation, they retired alone into a little boudoir or glass wing off the centre rooms, where they remained about a quarter of an hour. On

returning, the Emperor seemed much affected by the King's kindness and generosity, and indeed expressed as much with tears in his eyes to the Crown Prince, with whom he conversed for a few moments after the above interview. His face looked worn, but observant of all around; he frequently pulled his moustache, the ends of which were waxed as usual, but maintained his calm demeanour except for the few moments during which he was talking to the Crown Prince. His chief anxiety was to avoid his troops, and to obtain permission to pass through Belgium, instead of through France, to Aix-la-Chapelle, en route for the palace of "Wilhelms Höhe," in Cassel, a palace where his uncle, King Jerome of Westphalia, had once lived, when it was called "Napoleon's Höhe," and which place the King had appointed for his residence during the continuance of the war. The King also gave him permission to take with him some of the officers of his household, his servants, horses, carriages, and baggage, and appointed General Bozen (Prussian) and Prince Synar, late Prussian Secretary of Embassy in Paris, to attend him as Aides-de-Camp.

Dr. Russell has given us some interesting notes of the conversation that took place between the two sovereigns, which, though at first contradicted by Count Bismarck's paper, yet as personally the Count denied the contradiction, may be considered authentic. Dr. Russell, writing to 'The Times,' says:—

"The King spoke first. God, he said, had given the victory to his arms in the war which had been declared against

him. The Emperor replied that the war had not been sought by him. He had not desired or wished for it, but he had been obliged to declare war in obedience to the public opinion of France. The King made answer that he was aware it was not the Emperor's doing. He was quite sure of it. 'Your Majesty made war to meet public opinion, but it was your Ministers who created that public opinion which forced on the war.' His Majesty, after a pause, remarked that the French army had fought with great bravery. 'Yes,' said the Emperor; 'but, Sire, your Majesty's troops possessed a discipline in which my army has been wanting lately.' The King remarked that for some years the Prussian army had been availing itself of all new ideas, and watching the experiments of other nations before '66 and subsequently. 'Your artillery, Sire, won the battle. The Prussian artillery is the finest in the world.' The King bowed, and repeated that they had been anxious to avail themselves of the experiences of other nations. 'Prince Frederick Charles decided the fate of the day,' remarked the Emperor. 'It was his army which carried our position.' 'Prince Frederick Charles! I do not understand your Majesty. It was my son's army which fought at Sedan.' 'And where then is Prince Frederick Charles?' 'He is with seven army corps before Metz.' At these words the Emperor started, and recoiled as if he had been struck; but he soon recovered his self-possession, and the conversation was continued. The King inquired if his Majesty had any conditions to make or to propose. 'None. I have no power. I am a prisoner.' 'And may I ask, then, where is the Government in France with which I can treat?' 'In Paris; the Empress and the Ministers have alone power to treat. I am powerless. I can give no orders, and make no conditions.'"

The King on the same day sent the following telegram to the Queen at Berlin:—

*"From the King to the Queen.**"Before SEDAN, FRANCE,**"Friday, Sept. 2—1.22 P.M.*

"A capitulation, whereby the whole army at Sedan are prisoners of war, has just been concluded with General Wimpffen, commanding, instead of Marshal MacMahon, who is wounded. The Emperor surrendered himself to me, as he has no command, and left everything to the Regency at Paris. His residence I shall appoint after an interview with him at a rendezvous to be fixed immediately. Under God's guidance, what a course events have taken!"

And in subsequently referring to the same ever-memorable event, wrote:—

"VARENNES, Sept. 4—Morning.

"What a solemn moment when I met Napoleon! He was bowed down, but dignified. I have assigned him Wilhelms-höhe, near Cassel (capital of Hesse Cassel), as his residence. Our meeting took place in a little castle in front of the western glacis before Sedan. From there I rode along the front of the army at Sedan. The reception of the troops you can hardly imagine. It was indescribable. At eight o'clock, when it became dark, I finished my ride, which had lasted five hours, but I did not return here till one. May God help us further."

In a letter to the Queen he also recurred to the meeting, and gave an account of the battle of Sedan in the following terms:—

"VENDRESSE, South of SEDAN, Sept. 3.

"You already know through my three telegrams the entire extent of the great historical event which has just happened. It is like a dream, though one has seen it unroll itself hour by hour.

"When I reflect that after one great and successful war, I

could expect nothing more famous during my reign, and when now I see it followed by this act, forming part of the world's history, I bow myself before God, who alone has chosen me, my army, and my allies, to accomplish it, and has appointed us the instruments of His will. Only in this sense can I comprehend the work, in order with humility to praise God's guidance and grace.

"Now for a picture of the battle and its consequences, in very brief form.

"On the evening of August 31 and the morning of the 1st inst., the army had reached the prescribed positions round Sedan. The Bavarians formed the left wing, near Bazeilles, on the Meuse; next them were the Saxons, towards Moncelle and Daigny; the Guards were still marching towards Givonne, and the 5th and 11th Corps were towards St. Menges and Fleigneux. As the Meuse here makes a sharp bend, no corps were posted between St. Menges and Donch ry, but at the latter place were W rtembergers, who also covered the rear against sallies from M zi res. Count Stolberg's cavalry divisions were in the plain of Donch ry as the right wing. In the front, opposite Sedan, were the rest of the Bavarians.

"The battle began, in spite of a thick fog, at Bazeilles, quite early in the morning, and by degrees a very hot fight developed itself, in which house by house had to be taken, this lasting almost the whole day. Sch ler's Erfurt Division (4th Corps of the Reserve) were obliged to take part. When at eight o'clock I reached the front before Sedan, the great battery was beginning its fire against the fortifications. At all points there now broke out a hot artillery fire, which lasted for hours, and during which ground was gradually gained on our side. The villages above named were taken.

"Very deep ravines with woods made the advance of the infantry difficult, and favoured the defence. The villages Illy and Floing were taken, and, by degrees, the circle of fire drew closer and closer round Sedan. It was a grand sight from our position, on a commanding height behind the before-mentioned

battery, to look beyond the village of Frenois over Point Torcy. The vehement resistance of the enemy commenced gradually to slacken, as we could perceive by the broken battalions, which hastily retreated from the woods and villages. Their cavalry endeavoured to attack several battalions of our 5th Corps, who, however, maintained their position excellently. The cavalry galloped through the spaces between the battalions, then turned round, and went back the same way; this being repeated three times by different regiments, so that the field was strewn with corpses and horses. All this we could see perfectly well from our standpoint. I cannot yet learn the number of this regiment.

“When the retreat of the enemy at all points became a flight, and all—infantry, cavalry, and artillery—pressed into the town and its immediate vicinity, and when no indication yet presented itself of the intention of the enemy to extricate himself from this hopeless position by a capitulation, nothing remained but to bombard the town with the before-named battery. After it had, in twenty minutes, set fire to the town at several points, which, with the many burning villages over the whole battle-field, made a terrible impression, I ordered a suspension of the firing, and sent Lieutenant-Colonel von Brouart, of the General Staff, with a white flag, to propose the capitulation of the army and fortress. He was met by a Bavarian officer, who informed me that a French *parlementaire*, with a white flag, had announced himself at the gate. Lieutenant-Colonel von Brouart was admitted, and on asking for the Commander-in-Chief he was unexpectedly led before the Emperor, who wished immediately to hand him a letter for me. The Emperor asked what kind of proposal he brought, and being told a summons for the surrender of the army and fortress, he replied that he must refer him on this point to General de Wimpffen, who had just assumed the command in lieu of the wounded MacMahon, and that he would now send his adjutant, General Reille, with the letter to myself. It was seven o'clock when Reille and Brouart came to me, the latter

a little in advance; and it was first through him that I learnt with certainty the presence of the Emperor. You may imagine the impression which this made upon all of us, but particularly on myself. Reille sprang from his horse and gave me the letter of the Emperor, adding that he had no other commission. Before I opened the letter I said to him, 'But I demand, as the first condition, that the army lay down its arms.' The letter begins thus:—'*N'ayant pas pu mourir à la tête de mes troupes, je dépose mon épée à votre Majesté*' (Translation: 'Not having died at the head of my army, I yield my sword to your Majesty'); leaving all the rest to me.

"My answer was that I deplored the manner of our meeting and begged that a plenipotentiary might be sent, with whom we might conclude the capitulation. After I had given the letter to General Reille, I spoke a few words with him as an old acquaintance, and so this act ended. I gave Moltke powers to negotiate, and directed Bismarck to remain behind in case political questions should arise. I then rode to my carriage and drove here, greeted everywhere along the road with the loud hurrahs of the troops, who were marching up and everywhere singing the National Hymn. It was deeply touching. Candles were lighted everywhere, so that we were driven through an improvised illumination. I arrived here at eleven o'clock, and drank with those about me to the prosperity of an army which had accomplished such feats.

"As on the morning of the 2nd I had received no news from Moltke respecting the negotiations for the capitulation, which were to be carried on in Donchéry, I drove to the battlefield, according to agreement, at eight o'clock, and met Moltke, who was coming to obtain my consent to the proposed capitulation, and told me, at the same time, that the Emperor had left Sedan at five o'clock in the morning, and had come to Donchéry. As he wished to speak with me, and as there was a château and park in the neighbourhood, I chose this for our meeting. At ten o'clock I reached the height before Sedan. Moltke and Bismarck appeared at twelve, with the capitulation

duly signed. At one o'clock I started again with Fritz, escorted by the cavalry staff. I alighted before the château, where the Emperor came to meet me. His visit lasted a quarter of an hour. We were both much moved at meeting again under such circumstances. What my feelings were, considering that I had seen Napoleon only three years before at the summit of his power, is more than I can describe.

"After this meeting, from half-past two to half-past seven o'clock, I rode past the whole army before Sedan.

"The reception given me by the troops, the meeting with the Guards, now decimated—all this I cannot describe to-day. I was much touched with so many proofs of love and devotion.

"Now, farewell, with a heart deeply moved at the conclusion of such a letter.

"WILHELM."

The Emperor passed the night at the château, and on the following morning (3rd) about 9 A.M. the Imperial cortège started for Libramont in Belgium. The Belgian Government, in answer to the applications of both sovereigns, had previously given leave for the passage of the Emperor and his suite through Belgium; and the route chosen was by road through Bouillon to Libramont, a station on the Luxembourg and Brussels railway, thence through Liège to Verviers, where the Emperor was to sleep, and so by Cologne to Cassel.

The carriages were escorted by two troops of Black Hussars, who rode uncloaked, notwithstanding the heavy rain which was falling. The Emperor, accompanied by Achille Murat, was in a brougham, and was dressed in the undress uniform of a Lieutenant-General,

with the Legion of Honour on his breast. To those who saw him pass, he looked pale, tired, and anxious, but still calm and free from nervousness. A long string of Imperial carriages followed, containing French and German officers, and then a number of mounted French officers, grooms, led horses, fourgons, &c. It is worthy of remark that the Imperial servants and horses were as well turned out and as splendidly appointed as in the piping times of peace at Paris.

Every courtesy and respect were shown to the Emperor throughout the route to Cassel, where he was received with military honours, and attended by Generals von Plonski and Grafmonts, Governor of the city of Cassel, and Captain von Dupenbrock Gruiter, commanding the hussars stationed at the palace. Among others of his recent favourites, he had with him Generals Felix Douay and Lebrun. In his temporary captivity I shall now leave him, and return to the events that took place at Sedan after the capitulation.

Having returned from signing the capitulation, General de Wimpffen had the following proclamation posted over the town :—

“Soldiers!—Yesterday you fought against very superior forces. From daybreak until nightfall you resisted the enemy with the utmost valour, and expended almost your last cartridge. Exhausted by the struggle, you were unable to respond to the appeal made to you by your generals and your officers to attempt to gain the road to Montmédy, and to rejoin Marshal Bazaine. Two thousand men only were able to rally, in order to make a supreme effort. They were

compelled to stop at the village of Balan, and to return to Sedan, where your general announced, with deep sorrow, that there existed neither provisions nor ammunition. The defence of the place was impossible, its position rendering it incapable of offering resistance to the numerous and powerful artillery of the enemy. The army collected within the walls of the town, unable either to leave it or to defend it, and means of subsistence for the inhabitants and the troops being wanting, I have been compelled to adopt the sad resolution of treating with the enemy. Having proceeded yesterday to the Prussian head-quarters, with full powers from the Emperor, I could not at first resign myself to accept the clauses which were imposed. It was only this morning, when threatened by a bombardment to which we had no means of replying, that I determined to make further efforts, and I have obtained conditions which relieve you as far as possible from the humiliating formalities which the usages of war usually exact under such circumstances. Nothing now remains for us, officers and soldiers, but to accept with resignation the consequences of necessities against which an army could not struggle—want of provisions and deficiency of ammunition. I have at least the consolation of having avoided a useless massacre, and of preserving to the country soldiers who are capable at some future time of rendering good and brilliant service.

“DE WIMPFEN,

“*General Commanding-in-Chief.*”

The scene in the town on the terms of the capitulation becoming known beggars description, and I have been assured by eye-witnesses and by the inhabitants, that the disorganization that prevailed was so dangerous, and there was such a scarcity of provisions, that the civilians were glad to receive their conquerors with civility. The men vowed they had been betrayed, and threatened their officers with assassination, and

indeed General de Failly narrowly escaped their vengeance. Some were boastful, others seemed inclined still to fight, whilst a very large proportion, seeking to drown their shame in liquor, staggered about intoxicated, dangerous alike to friend and foe. Discipline was conspicuous only by its absence. Not one regiment could muster its scattered units, who wandered about a prey to conflicting passions, seeking on whom to vent their curses and chagrin. Many of them, indeed, were wounded, but found no means available for the dressing of their wounds. Guns, waggons, and caissons blocked the extremely narrow streets; and one of the most piteous sights was that presented by the horses, who in many cases tied to gun and waggon wheels, and abandoned by their riders, and furious with hunger, squealed and kicked in their endeavours to get free, and many of them succeeding in their endeavour, dashed wildly about in their paroxysms of fear and hunger. Dead horses were cut up and eaten by the soldiers; human corpses lay here and there; abandoned arms and equipment of all kinds littered the streets; the rain poured down in torrents, and the streets seemed a perfect pandemonium, and presented an ever-changing scene of horrors to the unwilling observer. With reference to the destruction of arms I should add that quantities of arms of all kinds, equipment, and even mitrailleuses, were thrown into the Meuse to prevent their falling into the enemy's hands, and the eagles were burnt or broken up. Indeed, fishing arms out of the Meuse

afforded amusement to the German garrison for many a day afterwards.

19,000 French troops succeeded in escaping into Belgium, where they were disarmed and interned; and a similar fate befell a large number of German wounded. The wounded of both sides were sent to Namur.

On the 3rd Sedan was delivered up to the Germans, and the French prisoners, accompanied by many of their officers, who refused to give their parole not to fight against the enemy during the rest of the campaign, were marched out to a great camp formed on the peninsula made by the bend of the Meuse, according to the terms of the convention. Luckily no collisions occurred, owing to the exertions of the French officers and to the judicious management of the Germans, who avoided as much as possible any direct contact with their prisoners.

The prisoners were afterwards sent to Germany under escort at the rate of about 10,000 a day.

About 95,000 prisoners fell into the conquerors' hands, besides an enormous number of guns and horses; in fact persons in the vicinity bought up horses for five and ten francs apiece. The number of cannon and mitrailleuses taken was very large, and they covered acres of ground when parked, and many of them were used by the Germans in their subsequent sieges of Verdun and Mézières.

I have chosen the following as one of the most complete accounts of the after-scenes on the field of battle.

The correspondent of the 'Daily News' writes as follows :—

"The evacuation of the town has gone on in earnest to-day. Already there is a great camp on the peninsula within the bend of the Meuse. The prisoners taken in the battle have gone away in strong detachments, guarded by German troops; and those who were upon the rainy, muddy road to the rear last night, as was the present writer, saw columns of Frenchmen tramping briskly along, with the German escort marching by their side in the worst of humours at being so employed, and with blankets muffled over the men's heads to keep off the rain. Well might the villagers stare at so novel a sight—their own countrymen blocking the way, but blocking it as prisoners—their own uniform dragged to prison, as if it were a capital crime to be a Frenchman. The poor folks seemed chiefly anxious to avoid further loss, and chiefly suspicious of soldiers of any kind. But it was clear that amid all their terror and all their fear of downright starvation, they had a warm corner in their hearts for the lads of their own language and nation. I have seen many women to-day cooking for the prisoners and trying to push through the crowd to bring them small dainties. In the church at Donchéry there were hundreds of French soldiers collected this morning. Cavalry and infantry, Zouaves and Cuirassiers, huddled together in marvellous fashion. The smart, dashing men whom we have seen when we travelled through France were reduced to a condition of semi-shabbiness and blank despondency which was something new to see. They were wont to be the gayest fellows in the world, and here were rolled up, tumbled over, and generally 'done for,' by men whom they had been rash enough to despise.

"I rode over the greater part of the battle-field yesterday morning—the morning after the fight. It was a shocking thing to see so many dead men and wounded men, and dead and wounded horses, crowded together in some places. It

was a sight to cause reflections, as the old Frenchman said who lived in the village where the fighting had been hottest. "*Ah! mon Dieu, monsieur, c'est là la guerre.*" He took a sombre view of *la guerre*, for the scene was horrible. With two friends who were anxious to study the positions of the armies contending on September 1st, I went round through Donchéry and past the great bend of the Meuse, came towards the French lines as the 11th Prussian Corps had come, and pushing southward between the outposts of the hostile armies, traversed the railway bridge at Bazeilles, to return to head-quarters. The first sign of active and immediate war was the block of prisoners at Donchéry. There they were, of all arms of the service, the dark-faced Turco and the young boyish conscript, collected in a mass, ready to be marched away. The plain beyond Donchéry was covered with slightly-wounded men wandering to the rear. French and German, friend and foe, it mattered not; they went amicably along, the common suffering making them friends. No one seemed to dream of further violence and further fighting. The battle was over, and they were glad to creep together to the rear, with little civilities exchanged in the way of pipe-lights and sips of brandy, and with no more hostile feeling than two patients already in an hospital. We passed hundreds of them as we went round the bend of the stream and came upon the first signs of the conflict of the day before. There was a dead horse, a cuirass, a heap of broken weapons. In this cottage were several wounded Frenchmen, taking some soup with a wounded Prussian, who seemed almost too much hurt to eat. Behind the garden wall was a dead cuirassier, his hands clutching the grass in the agony of death, his face stern and determined. No one noticed him any more than if he were a dead horse. In quiet England whole districts will turn out to see a murdered family, and here on a battle-field the same murdered family would be trampled into the mud without being noticed. This meadow on the hill-side is full of mangled horses and

dead cuirassiers. It was here that they made a frantic attempt to break through, and were mowed down by the Prussian fusillade. You must have been on several battle-fields to understand the signs of what has taken place by the look of the spot next morning. This group of dead horses, with a helmet or two and a dozen cuirasses, with a broken trumpet and three dead cuirassiers, means serious work. The dark stains on the ground are where the wounded have lain and been removed. The little heap of swords under that hedge is where some dismounted troopers were forced to surrender. Then we come to Prussian helmets crushed and trampled. Some are marked by shell or bullet, and have blood upon them. They tell of loss to the regiment to which they belonged. Others have no particular trace of violence, and may either be signs of wounded men, or of men who have simply thrown their helmets away in the heat of action, and put on their forage caps to march more lightly. These dark stains, surrounded by knapsack and rifle, by great-coat and cooking-tin, are where men have lain who have been badly wounded, or even killed, but whose friends have made them as comfortable as could be under the difficulties of the time. One has a little shelter of twigs and branches put to keep off the sun ; another has had a blanket propped on two rifles, and his knapsack for a pillow. But he has died in the night, and is left with his cloak over his face until the burying party shall come round. See yonder drums and knapsacks, stains of blood, and dead men lying on their faces. It is where a blow has been struck at some infantry regiment. The men have fallen under a musketry fire, and the line of dead shows where the ground was held. Come a few steps farther to the rear. You perceive a few more dead men, shot whilst in flight, and a number of bright, well-cleaned rifles scattered on the turf. This is where the regiment broke and fled, where some perished with their backs to the foe and others threw down their arms. We might gather the minutest details of the loss on either side if only human

strength and energy sufficed to traverse this immense tract in a single morning. When another day has passed, and the dead are buried and the arms collected, it is difficult to judge of the fight by seeing the ground; whilst on the third or fourth day, the dead horses become so much decayed that, until they are removed, it is well-nigh impossible to move about where they have fallen. All honour to the helpers of the wounded—to the regular and volunteer hospital assistants. Their red-cross badge must be a joy to many a sufferer; and though some who wear the badge seem disposed to “loaf” about rather than to be helpful and active, yet the greater part do their duty well. The better sort of volunteers in the work—the Sisters of Charity and surgeons who have donned the badge—are full of zeal. Some of the best families of Germany are represented among these helpers of the wounded; there are several foreigners, too, engaged in the common cause of humanity. Thanks to all that is done, the wounded are so soon removed to villages, or placed under some sort of shelter, that even next morning there are but a few of them to be seen on the ground. They are being brought to the nearest ambulance waggon on stretchers, with many cries and groans, Heaven help them! or are lodged in a cottage near the field, or are carefully bandaged up and laid on straw, and sent jolting painfully away in country carts to a more remote hospital.

“We found the hill-side north-west of Sedan covered with dead men and horses. The village in the hollow between the hostile lines was not much knocked about, and there were few shell-marks on the road leading up to the summit. But once arrived at the point where the Prussian fire had begun to tell, we found traces of its terrible effect. Here lay a dead horse in the middle of the road, with saddle and bridle, just as it had fallen. Here was a Frenchman shot through the head, behind a small clump of earth, where he had taken shelter in skirmishing. Then there were several more horses and men lying upon the road; and at length a

slight breastwork to either side, carried along the ridge of the hill, and full of French soldiers who had died in its defence. The ground began to be ploughed up with the shell-fire from the opposite rising ground, where the Prussian artillery so long remained. Near the two trees and the cottage prominent on the summit, were traces of the sharp fighting which I had observed the previous day.

"A mitrailleuse battery, of four pieces, was surrounded with dead bodies; horses and men were lying on all sides—I cannot quite say in heaps, but very thickly scattered. At one place there were horses as thick as they could lie. But this was a little farther down the slope to the southward, where I had seen that gallant cavalry charge. The Chasseurs-à-cheval and the Chasseurs d'Afrique had dashed along the hill-side, half-hidden in the dust which they raised, and had been destroyed by a steady fusillade. Here lay the famous light horsemen, with their bright uniforms dabbled in blood, and their fiery little steeds crushed and mangled by Prussian shells. Most of the men and horses now on the ground were dead, but some few wounded men yet lingered in agony, with white rings tied to sticks that were planted beside them as a means of calling the surgeon's attention when he should have time to revisit them. The badly wounded horses, more fortunate for once in being brutes, had been killed to put them out of pain, and only a stray horse slightly wounded stood dismally here and there, wondering, perhaps, what it could all mean. Behind the scene of the light cavalry charge is a ravine that separates this shoulder of the rising ground from that immediately above Sedan. In the ravine there had been great slaughter at the end of the fight, when the French were crowded together from different points. Up behind the woods on the farthest summit of the rising ground was all the *débris* of a rout. It had been clear, even from a distance, that the beaten army struggled hard. Yet, nevertheless, they had been beaten, and here were arms thrown down, waggons abandoned, caps and coats, swords and rifles of every branch of the

service, lying scattered on the ground. Some considerable body of troops, cut off from Sedan by the advance of the Prussians, had tried to break through to the town, and had been dispersed or captured. The whole of the northward and north-eastward slopes, at what we may call from this side the country, at the back of the town, showed traces of this crowding together and of the heavy cross-fire of German artillery, which had begun so soon as the circle of the attack became narrowed to a sufficient degree. Nearly 100,000 men, as now appears, were hampered and shut in by less than 200,000 of their enemies. No amount of devotion could extricate the French army when once it had become the centre of a converging fire. The ghastly wounds inflicted on most of the French dead, whom I saw upon the hill, showed that they had fallen under an artillery fire, and the ground was in many places so ploughed up that a blanket could scarcely have been laid on it without covering some spot where a shell had exploded. The thick woods at the back of the town were full of wreck and rubbish—abandoned waggons, with the dead horses at the side, to show why they had been so left; stores of biscuit, harness, and soldiers' knapsacks were still very plentiful as one approached the village of Bazeilles, southward of Sedan, where the Bavarians had fought. The village was on fire, and the streets presented shocking sights to scare away the inhabitants again for a couple of days more, should they now return. The half-burnt bodies of Frenchmen and Bavarians were being brought out from among ruins, and laid by the road-side. Men yet living, but terribly wounded and scorched, were moved on litters to beyond the stifling smoke of the conflagration. There was reason to fear that many poor lads had been literally roasted when the fire came upon them, and their wounds forbade all hope of escape. This village was, perhaps, the gloomiest part of all the acres of pain and death spread around Sedan. The interior of the town itself is said to be very much injured, but that I have not yet had time to visit."

On the 3rd September the advanced guards of the

German army started for Paris. The 3rd Army proceeded by Montmirail, Coulommiers, and Briecomte-Robert, while the combined army marched by the valley of the Marne. In order to carry out this arrangement the two armies had to cross each other's route, and this their wonderful organization enabled them to do at Rheims. My military readers will appreciate the magnitude and danger of such an operation, and its successful issue speaks volumes for the excellence of the staff. The subsequent acts of these armies are now well known, and they pass out of further notice in these pages, leaving us astonished at the magnitude of their successes.

That Bazaine by some means or another was aware of the date on which MacMahon should have been in his vicinity is evident from the fact that on the 31st August he attacked the 1st Army Corps of Prussians, the division of General Kummer, and the 4th Landwehr division on the east side of Metz in great force; but though the French fought through the night till the 1st September, they were beaten back at all points by the Germans, who by means of a telegraphic cordon they had established were enabled rapidly to concentrate their troops to repel them.

This sortie of Bazaine's convinces me that though MacMahon's attempt to relieve Metz was a very rash and dangerous strategical movement, yet that had he marched more rapidly and warily it is quite possible his object might have been achieved, and fresh lustre been added to the arms of France. The material he

had at hand, however, was to a certain extent very inferior; and much of the bad marching of the French may, I think, be ascribed to the ridiculous system of overloading their soldiers, who are required to carry the enormous weight of 75 lbs., made up as follows, *viz.*:—Chassepot rifle, $7\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.; bayonet and scabbard, 3 lbs.; ammunition, 93 rounds, 10 lbs. (distributed in pouches and knapsack); 1 pair of shoes; canvas havresack, great-coat, blanket, pair of trowsers, comb, brushes, housewife, 2 pair socks, 3 shirts, 4 lbs. rations, water bottle, canvas of *tente d'abri*, and some of the sticks for it; a camp kettle to every five men. Besides the above many of them carry entrenching tools. The Prussians on the other hand have an equipment very similar in weight to our own, and carry 72 rounds of ammunition. They have their knapsacks carried for them on carts whenever expeditious marching is required. This was the case before Sedan, and doubtless to this wise provision much of their success may be attributed. To enable them to do this the Germans have the Prussian Intendantur system, based on the principle of dividing and subdividing the responsibility into different sections, and applied even to regiments; in opposition to the French centralization system. Each German *corps d'armée* has its provision column, divided again into five columns (under proper officers), and all liable to be subdivided into smaller bodies if required; each division or subdivision has a responsible head, and any errors or shortcomings can at once be brought home to the right person. The infantry

battalion, about 1,030 strong on active service, has its ammunition waggon, a cart for the regimental books and pay chest, a hospital cart, an officers' baggage fourgon, and 18 horses. A cavalry regiment, about 700 strong, has four squadron waggons, one officers' baggage waggon, one field forge, and a hospital cart, for the draught of which 16 horses are allowed.

Each artillery regiment has nine ammunition columns, consisting of 49 waggons and 344 horses, subdivided into two divisions to supply ammunition to the guns, as well as for the small arms of the cavalry and infantry.

Besides these the artillery have further large reserves of ammunition to feed the afore-mentioned columns.

With so excellent an organization it cannot be wondered at that there was never a want of ammunition in the field ; and this contrasts most favourably with the French Intendance, which frequently failed to supply the troops in action with ammunition, besides suffering from the constant break-down of its provision trains. The Emperor's advisers preferred the system of centralization, basing it on the supposition that it would be too expensive to maintain separate matériel for every regiment.

The French Intendance monopolizes all the supply and transport branches of the service, and nothing can be done without reference to the central authority. The delays this caused to the French in the late war may be easily imagined, and the inconvenience and difficulty of expansion of the system condemned it at

once when placed in juxta-position with that of Germany. Rapid movements are essential to success in modern warfare, but no commander can advance unless assured of supplies of provisions and ammunition for his troops; and the dilatory movements of MacMahon are in a great measure attributable to his anxiety on that point, as not all the gallantry of his best soldiers could compensate for a want of supplies and an ill-managed Intendance.

But I must not dilate on what is at once so interesting and so important, lest I should stumble lamely through a subject that has already been so ably treated by prominent writers of the day; but before summing up the principal causes of the failure of the French arms, I intend to touch very lightly on the rifles and cannon of the contending armies. Scientific and professional men have already so well discussed their respective merits that it would be idle on my part to pretend to express any opinion concerning them; but as all of my readers may not have cared to purchase the high-priced volumes in which many of those opinions have appeared, I devote a few lines to give the result of a contest, the issue of which exercised so great an influence on the more important battles of the campaign.

As the needle-gun of the Prussians was the first breech-loading rifle that by its successful use attracted the attention of Europe, I shall give it the precedence.

It was first patented in England in 1831 by a Mr. Moser, and on an improved principle was first issued

to the Prussian troops in 1848; and though it has undergone certain modifications in its construction, the weapon of the present day varies but little from that of '48. For those who desire a detailed account of its mechanism, I think I cannot do better than refer my readers to Captain Hozier's work on the war, published in parts, in which I believe a very interesting description of its working, as well as that of the chassepot, will be produced.

The chassepot was the pet weapon of the late Empire, and was on its trial during the recent war. It was invented especially to compete with the needle-gun, and its superiority to the latter has certainly been proved in the severe test it has undergone. The chassepot has an initial velocity of 1,328 feet per second; the needle-gun of 990 feet per second. At 300 paces it scatters nearly double what the needle-gun does—this is a disadvantage. It can be fired $10\frac{1}{2}$ times per minute, while the needle-gun can only be discharged $7\frac{1}{2}$ times.

Its cartridges are smaller, and consequently more of them can be carried—a great advantage in the eyes of a French soldier, who fires in a great measure at random, and presents a great contrast to the phlegmatic and cautious Teuton. It carries effectively 1,800 yards, while the needle-gun can be depended upon only up to 600 yards. The advantage of so long an effective range must be patent to the most casual observer, but the French soldier nullified this great advantage by his random firing. Had it been in the

hands of the Germans it would have been murderous in its effect; and they themselves frequently acknowledged to me its superiority.

The mitrailleuse, another introduction of the Imperial *régime*, did not quite answer the expectations previously formed of it. Without an engraving of it it is difficult to explain its construction. It is in reality a series of rifled barrels, which by an ingenious mechanism discharge about twenty-five balls at each turn of the handle the soldier makes; the director is able to discharge one or all almost simultaneously. As the cartridges are ready fixed in the feed-cases, which are placed in the mitrailleuse, the process of reloading is very quick, and great rapidity of fire can be attained. It carries about 2,000 yards, but is not considered a great success, on account of its too concentrated delivery; where it strikes all must go down, but the area over which it spreads is very small, and this defect diminishes its importance as an effective weapon. The French guns were chiefly muzzle-loading bronze four and six pounders, carrying 15 lb. and 9 lb. shells respectively; while the Prussians used breech-loading guns of similar weight and calibre. The trajectory of the French gun, however, was very highly curved, owing to the shape of the missile it projected and the length of bore, and its initial velocity being small the ball starts at as lower rate than that from the Prussian gun, and opposing a larger area to the resistance of the air it loses its velocity quicker.

The Prussian breech-loader was open to this objec-

tion, however, which I believe condemns it amongst artillerymen in England, that after a few rounds there was often great difficulty in opening the breech.

The Prussian concussion shells were much more effective than the French shells exploded by time fuzes, because the former striking the hard ground exploded most effectively, while the time fuzes generally burst the French shells in the air, and it was much more difficult to calculate the range.

The same remark applies to the artillery fire as to that of the chassepot; the French fired so rapidly that they wasted most of their ammunition, while the Germans, quite cool and acting on very strict scientific principles, burst nearly every shell most effectively, and the concentration of the fire from all points on the unfortunate remnant of MacMahon's army at Sedan, was a most successful and well-directed tactical feature in the day's manoeuvres of so enterprising and well-served an artillery.

But before passing on to finish my task, one most important feature in the German armies that in a great measure conduced to their superiority over the French; one cause of success that while adding to their mobility blended the units of the army into a sentient machine; and for the absence of which no superiority of weapon or organization could or would have compensated, must not be overlooked.

Many of my readers will have anticipated what I am about to refer to, and will endorse my views as to the excellence of the German drill.

The Germans used the company as their unit for manœuvring; the French, the battalion.

In 1847 the Prussians adopted the system of manœuvring by companies; their battalions were composed of four companies, each about 250 strong, with a mounted captain. Each battalion can at any moment be broken up into four small columns, which are formed by the breaking up of each of the four companies into three subdivisions, each about 80 strong.

The captain thus commands a handy little battalion, which he moves independently, unless otherwise ordered by the officer commanding.

It is needless to say that when this change was first proposed it met with much opposition from the majors and field officers, but the practical advantages of it when tested in war became too apparent to allow their prejudices to stand in the way of its adoption, and the present system is nearly identical with that propounded in 1847.

In the recent war the company column formation of the Prussians has stood the severest practical tests, and come victorious out of the contest; wherever the fighting was close and desperate; whenever rapid movements were desirable, then and there it was resorted to, and invariably with success. Covered by skirmishers, these small and handy columns ever held the ground they gained, and were not too unwieldy to negotiate the difficult positions they so frequently had to attack; besides which their numerical weakness enabled them to find cover where a battalion would

have stood but to have been decimated. The system is at once so handy and convenient for the operation of the breech-loader, and yet so loose, that none but highly-disciplined troops, possessing an unshaken confidence in their officers, could be trusted to work by it; but applied to the German armies it met with unmeasured success; and even when a temporary check was received, or a retreat inevitable, no want of cohesion ever presented itself, or permitted a retreat to become a rout. Whether such a system could be successfully applied to the French army is open to much doubt; but it could not experience a greater break-down than that which befell the battalion unit system of the French. They still stuck to their old traditions, but trained their men to a looser method than before, and in also employing masses of skirmishers rendered them very mobile. But the free use of skirmishers necessitates an amount of discipline, self-reliance, and confidence in the officers that the French latterly wanted, and that which proved an element of success in the German army became a source of danger and failure in the French.

The cavalry drill, too, of the Prussians was excellent, but its chief merit lay not in the combined movements of the mass, but in the instructions which guided its units in making reconnaissances, in keeping up the communications of the armies, in gaining information of all kinds, and in so covering the flanks and front of the advancing Teutonic hordes that the ill-informed and badly-served French generals never knew

whether their presence was due to the exigencies of foraging, or whether it implied the propinquity of the main army. The ubiquitous Uhlan, a name misappropriately applied to all the German light cavalry, is a European term herited from the late war; and the whole cavalry force by its gallantry and dash have achieved a well-deserved reputation.

With regard to its influence on MacMahon's march towards Metz much might be said, but I restrict myself to the following remarks:—It gave the information that enabled the Bavarians to surprise the French at Beaumont, and the 3rd and 4th Armies to combine on the 30th of August, and captured numbers of prisoners, guns, and stores from the retreating and routed columns of the enemy. It covered the advance and swinging round of the 3rd Army, and at the battle of Sedan materially assisted in effecting the northern junction of the two German armies.

I have alluded to the excellence of the German artillery in a previous paragraph, and I only desire to ascribe here much of its success to the admirable Prussian tactical direction by which it was worked; the gist of all of which is that direct fire by masses of artillery is of little avail, and to be avoided, but that while batteries should be attached in great numbers to an army they should have a common object to concentrate their fire on, and at the same time should do so from such different positions as will enable them mutually to bring a heavy cross and enfilade fire, if

possible, to bear on the point of attack. And further, rather in opposition to our own traditional instructions, that artillery should act independently of infantry support.

How ably the German artillery fulfilled its mission and acted up to these instructions at Sedan, and how completely its batteries enfiladed the fortifications of that fortress, and assisted the attack on Bazeilles and Balan, we have already seen ; but I do not entirely go with those who give it the only place of honour in the success at Sedan, or attribute the French defeat there to its influence alone. I rather incline to ascribe all that took place there to a variety of causes, of which it, however, forms an important one. And this appropriately leads me to the conclusion that from this battle, as indeed from all those that preceded it, I am justified in deducing the following causes of failure :—

1st. The enormous difference in point of numbers between the contending armies ; the Germans having in this battle more than double the strength of their adversaries.

2nd. The incapacity of the French Intendance to furnish supplies of ammunition, provisions, and stores.

3rd. The high state of organization of the German armies, descending to such minor details as identification tickets and grave-digging corps.

4th. The wastefulness of ammunition of the French when using their chassepots.

5th. The admirable concentration of the German

artillery fire on certain points from different positions, and their numbers, weight of guns, range, and precision of fire. The first Napoleon used his artillery in much the same way; and the Germans attacked Bazeilles under cover of its fire, and crossed the river Meuse, getting close to the French centre, under cover of the fog, as Napoleon I. did at Austerlitz.

6th. The disparity between the training, education, and position of the French and German officers.

7th. The want of strategical genius to make up for the German superiority in numbers.

8th. The strategical knowledge displayed by the Germans, by means of which masses were brought to bear on smaller bodies, and armies and corps separated and beaten in detail; and armies converged towards each other and met at a given place on a given day with mathematical accuracy.

9th. The unity of command in the German armies, by means of which through the King, as Commander-in-Chief, implicit obedience was yielded to General Moltke's strategical directions, and the complete chain of military command brought to bear on the execution of them.

10th. And lastly, the inferior discipline and want of cohesion in the French army, as compared with the discipline, steadiness, and wonderful intelligence displayed by all arms of the German service; and especially by the artillery in their knowing when to advance unprotected by infantry, and what advantageous positions to take up; and by the cavalry, in

their scouring the country for intelligence, deceiving the French as to the whereabouts of the main body, and enabling their commanders to surprise the French, ever heedless of such precautions, as at Beaumont, where De Failly's corps was surprised and routed : all of which shows the absolute necessity of teaching an army in time of peace as far as possible the system that it must follow in time of war. And before proceeding farther, I wish to lay before my readers the meaning of the word discipline, as laid down by Colonel Hamley, as I shall use it in two or three places farther on :—"Discipline is a union of very different qualities, each of which is an important element in war. It means cohesion of the units and suppleness of the mass ; it means increased firmness and increased flexibility ; it means the most efficient combination of many and various parts for a common end."

Most people limit the causes of the misfortunes of the late war, and the inefficient state in which the declaration of war found the French army, to the luxuries of the Empire and the system of centralization prevailing in every department ; but in my humble opinion, if we look below the surface, we shall find much to account for the failure of the French arms in the political state of the army at the outbreak of the war.

Without doubt the nation, of which being conscript the army was to a certain extent the reflex, had for the last forty years been amassing enormous wealth,

and had latterly hurried to make money to be spent in the pleasures of the capital at a railroad pace. The Emperor, understanding his people, had fostered this commercial ambition, and sought to secure the future of his dynasty by enriching their hearths and homes, and by associating his name with every great enterprise in art, literature, or commerce, as his uncle's already was with the national military glory.

The court was most luxurious, and among an imitative bourgeoisie everything became subservient to money.

The army did not escape the prevailing mania, and its luxuries and excesses were winked at to keep it in good humour till, demoralized by the material comforts of civilization, it became enervated by a second Capua. The pleasures of a luxurious life made fighting unpleasant to the mass on the first reverses, and devoid of the patriots' feelings, the scorn of death no longer was their heritage.

The aristocracy of the army, however, and indeed the mass of the officers, did not spare their best blood to stem the torrent of invasion ; and fighting, as the educated officers of every country have ever fought, gave their lives for their country, preferring death to dishonour, and added to the roll of those brave men whose loss France is now lamenting.

Amongst the lower ranks, too, there were gallant exceptions, and at Sedan, as on other battle-fields, here and there groups of dead soldiers were found,

who back to back had met their fate, weapon in hand, and face to the foe.

I pass over the unfortunate break-down of the Intendance, and of the want of organization at the commencement of the campaign, and I come to the political cancer that had eaten into the heart of the French army; the pernicious doctrine of equality; eighty years before it had infected the nation, and then while luxuries and absinthe ruined their physique, this insidious moral poison instilled itself into the veins of the army. Discipline, as already defined, and subordination are essential to the success of an army, but how can they exist alongside equality. The soldier thought himself equal to his officer, and yielded but an unwilling obedience. When promoted, having never learnt to obey, he was seldom fitted to command. No wonder success was wanting. To ensure it to an army requires obedience, discipline, an absence of self, a thirst for knowledge, a disregard of danger, and the cheerful endurance of hardships, added to a perfect organization in the civil departments. Politics must be entirely excluded from it, and unfortunately these elements of discord were but too present in the French army.

In what I have written I trust I have given no cause of offence. A more gallant army never faced an enemy, and its heroism and valiant deeds do not suffer by comparison with the doings and traditions of a past century; but I have only tried to touch on some of the causes of its temporary failure to beat

back the invader; causes which doubtless by this time it has itself eradicated.

The German army on the other hand has had a different watchword, which has successfully carried it through the fiery ordeal it has just undergone—obedience to constituted authority; there is the clue to its success; the main-spring that, having set in motion the whole, has maintained its units, performing with assured regularity their allotted task. No insidious poison has been there, working to defeat the object of the guiding hand; the master mind, planning the most marvellous and wise combinations, the result of sound practical study, has had but to turn the key and set the machine in motion, confident of the success that must follow the movements of a body so constituted.

The Prussian army, of which the other German armies are exact copies, is the representative of a well-organized monarchy.

The King, its head, though a perfect autocrat, while following the principles laid down and maintained during two centuries by his wise and brave ancestors, has led the cause of progress, and adopted such changes and reforms as are calculated to strengthen his own power, while improving the condition of his people. Simple in his habits, and frugal to a degree, he has imparted a healthy tone to society; and the army, composed of all classes of the people, conscript in the widest sense of the word, has not failed to imitate so good and so high an example. The officers as a rule

belong to the aristocratic portion of the community, and while exacting implicit obedience from those under their command yield implicit obedience to their superiors, and are an element of strength to the Crown and the army. The soldier is sufficiently educated by a paternal Government to appreciate the fact that unity and obedience, which constitute discipline, are essential to success in military matters; and he therefore sinks his political identity for the two or three years during which he is called upon to serve, and becomes a living machine, thinking only on such occasions as his superiors require him to; and at the conclusion of his service he carries back to his family the habits of order and discipline he has acquired in the army, and his children, and consequently the nation, cannot but profit hereafter by his influence.

The officers, instead of spending their time at the cafés, and wasting their energies under the influence of absinthe, direct their attention to the studies of war, theoretical or practical, as they may have opportunity, and gain the confidence of their men and a knowledge of their temperaments and habits by a judicious intermixture, and by showing their fitness for command.

Under such a system, where no link of the chain is wanting to bind together king and peasant, where all have had for years but one common object in view, who can wonder at the success achieved? One national ambition has influenced the whole, and while raising the Prussian monarch into a German Emperor has disintegrated the neighbouring empire, and humiliated

the people who made them drain the cup of degradation to the dregs after Jena. Under such a constitution, and with such a people, whose motto is "For God and for the Fatherland," what great things may yet be done ! What great things have already been achieved !

One great cause of the German success that must not be overlooked is the excellence of its staff, which has from its honoured chief to its lowest grade evinced such wonderful intelligence, and materially contributed to the national success. Another is the perfection of the German equipment, and the organization of their admirable control departments of various branches ; and I think I may fairly ask the nation, Have we these ?

My remarks have already exceeded the limits I had intended, but I cannot conclude without a few words on the gallantry and patriotism of Marshal MacMahon, whose name will ever be identified with the battle of Sedan.

With reference to his strategy before Sedan we must remember that he was terribly hampered by the instructions he received from the Government at Paris, and the tardiness of his movements in the march from Rheims towards Metz may be in some measure attributed to the inferiority of a large portion of his troops, and of the inability of the Intendance to forward his supplies. His personal gallantry on all occasions, his great tactical skill, and his patience and endurance under defeat must ever stand forth as bright spots in his military career ; and I trust in holding him up in

these pages to the British soldier as one whose gallant deeds are most worthy of emulation, I shall not be overstepping the limits of military etiquette. Whatever his faults and the mistakes he committed, no dishonourable act has ever been imputed to him; and while the position he now holds in France shows the estimation he is held in by the nation, his name will go down to posterity as of one *sans peur et sans reproche*.

If I have said ought to offend, my professional zeal must stand charged with it, as I have written these few pages with feelings of the highest admiration for both armies. Where two contend one must fail; but it is not always the victor who comes best out of the conflict.

And thinking of the consequences of a battle and of war in general I cannot omit to give my humble testimony to the self-denial and unsparing efforts of the agents of the International and other Red Cross societies to alleviate the miseries of the sick and needy, exposing themselves willingly, as they did, both male and female, to dangers of which many of us in our quiet English homes can form no idea. In the hospitals, on the field of battle, and on the line of route from place to place, they encountered difficulties and ran risks which must have been seen to be appreciated; and though occasionally some injudicious members of their craft clashed with the authorities, and were very properly excluded from the service, still they did as a body a vast amount of good; and many a con-

valescent soldier has returned to his home and people to speak with grateful recollection of the kind hand and sympathizing foreigner, who bound up his wounds and lightened his hours of weary pain.

Military writers will without doubt deduce much that will prove valuable and instructive to us from the incidents of this great war, of which the battle of Sedan forms so interesting a feature; and leaving to them a task so difficult, and yet so necessary, I turn to Colonel Hamley's 'Operations of War,' written some time since, and there find a passage which conveys in much clearer and more suitable terms than any in which I could hope to express it, the lesson I desire to convey from the result of this great war to the military student and the public at large; and that is:—"Not that numbers and wealth must prevail, nor that great generals are heaven-born; it is on the contrary that the conditions of success are attainable and capable of demonstration; that the preparation of study and thought is essential to skill in war; and that being thus prepared, a leader, in order to achieve the most notable successes, need not be gifted with inspiration, but only with the more appreciable, though still rare combination of sound sense, clear sight, and resolution."

“STRATEGY AND TACTICS DEFINED.”

HAVING lately heard much discussion as to the correct definitions of the military terms, “Strategy” and “Tactics,” and having seen them recently misapplied, I venture to lay before my readers the definitions of those terms as given by several well-known military writers, in the hope that those who do not endorse them, more especially referring to those in a position to speak with some weight and authority, may be induced to express their views on the subject in the public journals, and thereby profit the public in general, and the military student in particular.

To save trouble to those who may not have time to search for themselves, or who do not know where to lay their hands on books likely to contain definitions of these terms, I append extracts in full from the works of Jomini, Humbert, Ambert, Hamley, and Macdougall, all celebrated writers on military subjects, whose opinions are generally received as authorities by the curriculum of military history.

In the ‘*Études Tactiques*’ of General Baron Ambert we find the following passages:—

“Si l’officier désire connaître la tactique du champ de bataille, c’est-à-dire la combinaison des armes entre elles, il doit avoir recours à l’étude particulière et consulter les ouvrages qui traitent de la guerre. Or, ces ouvrages le

transportent, sans transition, du terrain de manœuvre de la garnison, dans le domaine de la stratégie, que Napoléon I^{er} nomme la 'grande tactique.'

"Ce domaine est celui des généraux en chef. L'esprit de l'officier particulier s'y trouble, et son regard se perd dans l'immensité de savantes combinaisons."

The Baron evidently intends the above definition of "la grande tactique" to represent what we know as "Strategy."

While he defines "Tactics" as follows :—

"Il existe cependant un domaine intermédiaire qui serait celui de la 'petite tactique,' tactique du champ de bataille, et qui consiste à connaître l'emploi d'une arme associée et opposée aux autres armes.

"C'est, dans la science de la guerre, la partie utile aux généraux, colonels et officiers supérieurs. C'est le côté pratique du métier de chef de colonne et de commandant de ligne."

Baron Jomini in his 'Précis de l'Art de la Guerre,' in explaining the five heads into which he divides the art of war, writes :—

"La 2^e est la stratégie, ou l'art de bien diriger les masses sur le théâtre de la guerre, soit pour l'invasion d'un pays, soit pour la défense du sien.

"La 3^e est la grande tactique des batailles et des combats.

"La 6^e est la tactique de détail."

Humbert, chef d'escadron, gives a more elaborate definition of these terms in a work published by him in 1866, and I subjoin selections from it :—

"*Stratégie*.—La stratégie peut être définie la science des conceptions et des directions; elle consiste à faire la guerre

sur la carte, et à déterminer le plan de campagne : c'est la science nécessaire au général en chef.

“De la grande tactique.”—La tactique en campagne sert à appliquer les manœuvres aux opérations de la guerre ; c'est sur le caractère des nations qu'elle doit être basée, aussi diffère-t-elle ordinairement suivant les peuples.”

And here he appends in a footnote an extract from the writings of Jacquinet de Presle, which we might almost imagine he had quoted in anticipation of the late war, and which contains advice his countrymen unfortunately neglected following :—

Footnote.—“Ainsi, chez un peuple vif, susceptible de passions violentes, la rapidité des mouvements et l'impétuosité dans l'attaque sont nécessaires ; tandis que pour une nation calme et tranquille le feu sera l'un des premiers éléments de sa force.”

He then goes on to say :—

“La stratégie combine et dirige de grands plans, la grande tactique les exécute, et par conséquent lui est subordonnée ; celle-ci s'apprend, celle-là est pour ainsi dire innée.

“A défaut de règles absolues à poser, les souvenirs de l'histoire ont servi à établir un certain nombre de principes généraux.”

Footnote.—“Ces principes, qui ont de tout temps existé, n'ont été dévoilés que récemment, à la suite des opérations de Bonaparte en Italie et du Prince Charles en Allemagne. Alexandre, Annibal, et César les avaient devinés ; Gustave Adolphe, le Prince Eugène, Turenne, et Frédéric en avaient fait de belles applications.

“Pour pouvoir appliquer judicieusement l'art de la grande tactique, il faut connaître les divers ordres de bataille en usage, les manœuvres et les marches, les positions militaires, enfin le mécanisme des batailles.

“Observons en outre que toute méthode de guerre doit se modifier suivant la configuration du terrain, et suivant le moral ou les mouvements habituels des adversaires. Des manœuvres invariables ne pouvaient amener à la longue que des revers.”

In Burn's 'Dictionary' I find the following definitions of Strategy and Tactics :—

Strategy.—"Science of military command, and of all the operations of war."

Tactics.—"Science of military movements made in presence of an enemy, and within reach of his artillery; the tactics of a soldier are the correct performance of military movements; those of the officer, to know how to direct their execution; and those of a general, to combine them in such a manner as to ensure success."

Colonel Hamley, now a writer on military subjects of European fame, gives a long but comprehensive explanation of these two military terms. He commences by summing them up briefly, and giving the key to their meaning as follows :—

"The theatre of war is the province of Strategy.—The field of battle is the province of Tactics."

Continuing, he says :—

"It is the object of Strategy so to direct the movements of an army, that when decisive collisions occur it shall encounter the enemy with increased relative advantage.

"If two armies advance towards each other till they meet, both equally covering their own communications, and equally ready to concentrate for action, it is evident that Strategy has no share in the result; for all that has been done is to bring them face to face, and leave it to force or tactical skill

to decide the issue. But when the movements of one of two armies have been so directed as to increase the chances in its favour, by forcing the enemy either to engage at a disadvantage, or to abandon territory under penalty of worse disaster, there is proof of a power which differs from the mere ability to fight.

"The purely military advantages to be attained by strategical operations are of two kinds: 1st. The probabilities of victory; 2nd. The consequences of victory.

"The triumph of Strategy is complete when the commander of one side succeeds, by the combinations of the campaign, in bringing his adversary's army into a position where the chances of victory are greatly against it, and where defeat will entail disasters beyond the loss of the battle.

"Strategical movements have the following objects: 1st. To menace or assail the enemy's communications with his base; 2nd. To destroy the coherence and connected action of his army, by breaking the communications which connect the parts; 3rd. To effect superior concentrations on particular points."

Colonel Macdougall, in his 'Theory of War,' treats them in the following manner:—

"The arbitrary distinction which has been made by military writers is that Strategy relates to the movements of an army on the theatre of war, when not in actual presence or eyesight of an enemy, however great or small the distance which separates them; while Tactics relates exclusively to the movements of an army when in the actual presence or eyesight of an enemy. The following definition applies equally to both:—

"Strategy and Tactics are the art of placing in a certain position at a certain time (meaning the right position at the right time) a body of troops in fighting order superior to that body which your enemy can then oppose to you."

In the 'Penny Cyclopædia' we find Strategy defined as follows:—

"Strategy (from the Greek *στρατηγία*, which may be translated 'Generalship') is, properly, the science of combining and employing the means which the different branches of the art of war afford for the purpose of forming projects of operations and of directing great military movements: it was formerly distinguished from the art of making dispositions, and of manœuvring, when in the presence of the enemy: but military writers now, in general, comprehend all these subjects under the denominations of grand and elementary tactics.

"Strategy consists chiefly in making choice of convenient bases (fortified places or strong positions), in order to place there in security the military establishments of an army; such as the barracks, hospitals, and magazines of ammunition and provisions, previously to commencing offensive operations, or in contemplation of the army being compelled to act on the defensive. In the former case, it may be necessary to decide on undertaking the siege of some fortress on a frontier, for the purpose of holding the neighbouring district in subjection, and commanding the roads by which it may be thought convenient to penetrate into the enemy's country, or by which the provisions and warlike stores may be brought up to the immediate seat of war. In the latter case, choice is to be made of positions strong by nature, or which may be made so by art, in order that the army may be enabled to dispute the ground gradually, to harass the enemy by frequent skirmishes, or to prevent him from receiving supplies by intercepting his convoys on the roads."

Tactics are defined in the following terms:—

"Tactics (*τακτικός*) properly signifies the art of forming the troops of an army in order of battle, and of making changes in the dispositions of the army of either, according as circumstances may require."

I think I have quoted from sufficient authorities to enable my readers to arrive at a definite conclusion as to the correct meaning of these two terms, and also of the manner in which they should be applied in referring to the incidents of a campaign ; and I shall conclude by giving as the result of my researches the definitions, kindly sent to me by Colonel Chesney, R.E., and inserted with his permission, and which it seems to me, while embodying the views of the others, condense the terms in which they are expressed, and in terse and concise language convey their meaning to the student, and leave but little opening for further controversy :—

“An armed contest is in general, as Clausewitz shows, composed of a number of distinct and complete acts, which are in fact the actions, and which form units of themselves. From this subdivision of a campaign or war there arise two separate functions: the one being ‘*the arrangement and management of the troops in action* ;’ the other, ‘*the employment of actions for the general purpose of the war*.’ The first constitutes ‘Tactics ;’ the second, ‘Strategy.’

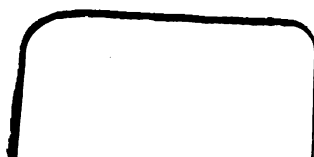
“Or, as the same authority elsewhere more briefly summarizes it, Tactics teach ‘*the use of forces in action* ;’ Strategy, ‘*the use of actions towards the object of the war*.’ A definition based, in my opinion, on principles much sounder than those in ordinary military text-books.”

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8. 'Operations of War.' By Colonel Hamley.
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10. 'Organization and Strength of the Hostile Armies.' By a Staff Officer.







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"Article 4.—The arms and baggage of the King and his army, given up in their present condition, at least, on the evening of the 2nd of September, and in subject to the position of His Majesty King William.

"Article 5.—Those officers who shall not have accepted the engagement set forth in Article 2, together with the armed troops, shall be treated as, except according to their regiments or corps, at military law. The parading will commence on the 2nd of September, and all marches on September 3. Those detachments who are ordered to the districts looking upon the Rhine, are left to be handed over to German authorities by the same day, will then resign their weapons and their children. The chief surgeons, without exception, will remain and attend to the wounded.

"For Berlin.

"Friedrich."

The capitulation signed, General Bismarck was at the battle-field, where it was to be met by the King, who at eight o'clock having received a message from the Emperor, according to previous agreement, at the place of rendezvous.

Having received his message of prayer for success, the King, accompanied by himself and by the Crown Prince of Prussia, and several of his suite, started about half-past twelve for the station where he arrived a few minutes later.

The Emperor arrived by express with great politeness, and several military aids, after a few moments' conversation they retired down into a hall, to look at or place any of the more common things they remained about a quarter of an hour.